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The 'PREACHING INDEX' for the Saints' Day or Festival Sermons extends over both parts of the Promptuary.

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 603. The Signs of Love. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. xxii. 37 . . M
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Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

605. Renewal. (Epist. Ser. I.) Eph. iv. 23 . . . F. V.
 606. The Old Age of Sin. (Epist. Ser. II.) Eph. iv. 23 . . . A.
 607. The City of Jesus Christ. (Gospel Ser. I.) Matt. ix. 1 . . F.
 608. The Sea of the World. (Gospel Ser. II.) Matt. ix. 1 . . V.
 609. The Sons of God. (Gospel Ser. III.) Matt. ix. 2 . . . D.
 610. Indifference. (Gospel Ser. IV.) Matt. ix. 2 . . . Ha.
 611. The Sea of the Lord. (Gospel Ser. V.) Matt. ix. 1 . . D. N.
 612. The Palsy of Sin. (Gospel Ser. VI.) Matt. ix. 2 . . . H.
 613. Sin in Thought. (Gospel Ser. VII.) Matt. ix. 4 . . . B.
 614. The Grounds of Hope. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) Matt. ix. 3 . . F.
 615. The Spiritual House. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. ix. 6 . . . C.
 616. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) Matt. ix. 1-9 . F.

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

617. The Way of Life. (Epist. Ser. I.) Eph. v. 15 . : . A.
 618. The Use of Time. (Epist. Ser. II.) Eph. v. 16 . . . Hy.
 619. The Invitation of the Lord. (Gospel Ser. I.) Matt. xxii. 4 . Ha.

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620. The Wonder of the Lord. (Gospel Ser. II.) Matt. xxii. 12 . . . A.
 621. The Fatal Choice. (Gospel Ser. III.) Matt. xxii. 3 . . . Pa.
 622. The Voice of Jesus Christ. (Gospel Ser. IV.) Matt. xxii. 12 . . . D.
 623. The Bride of Jesus Christ. (Gospel Ser. V.) Matt. xxii. 2 . . . F.
 624. The Severity of Divine Justice. (Gospel Ser. VI.) Matt. xxii. 13 D. N.
 625. The Self-Condernnation of the Lost. (Gospel Ser. VII.) Matt. xxii. 13 B.
 626. Friendship. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) Matt. xxii. 12 . . . V.
 627. The Calls of God. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. xxii. 3 . . . F.
 628. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) Matt. xxii. 2-15 . . . F.

Twenty-First Sunday after Trinity.

629. The Spiritual Combat. (Epist. Ser. I.) Eph. vi. 12 . . . A.
 630. The Battle of Life. (Epist. Ser. II.) Eph. vi. 11 . . . F. V.
 631. Prayer the Life of the Soul. (Gospel Ser. I.) John iv. 49 . . . Ha.
 632. The Conversion of the World. (Gospel Ser. II.) John iv. 45 . . . F.
 633. The Force of Example. (Gospel Ser. III.) John iv. 53 . . . Pa.
 634. The Four Lives. (Gospel Ser. IV.) John iv. 51 . . . D.
 635. Parental Care. (Gospel Ser. V.) John iv. 49 . . . F.
 636. The Parable of Action. (Gospel Ser. VI.) John iv. 50 . . . A.
 637. The Death of the Soul. (Gospel Ser. VII.) John iv. 49 . . . B.
 638. The Weak Christian. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) John iv. 48 . . . F.
 639. The Wonderful Cure. (Gospel Ser. IX.) John iv. 50 . . . D. N.
 640. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) John iv. 46-54 . . . F.

Twenty-Second Sunday after Trinity.

641. Confidence. (Epist. Ser. I.) Phil. i. 6 . . . A.
 642. The Need of Grace. (Epist. Ser. II.) Phil. i. 6 . . . F. V.
 643. Our Great Creditor. (Gospel Ser. I.) Matt. xviii. 23, 24 . . . A.
 644. Forgiveness. (Gospel Ser. II.) Matt. xviii. 33 . . . Ha.
 645. The Danger of Pardoned Sin. (Gospel Ser. III.) Matt. xviii. 34 B.
 646. The Debt of Man. (Gospel Ser. IV.) Matt. xviii. 28 . . . C.
 647. Reasonable Service. (Gospel Ser. V.) Matt. xviii. 23 . . . D.
 648. The Just Account. (Gospel Ser. VI.) Matt. xviii. 23 . . . D. N.
 649. Pardoning Grace. (Gospel Ser. VII.) Matt. xviii. 22 . . . Ha.
 650. God, Our Avenger. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) Matt. xviii. 35 . . . F.
 651. The Tormentors. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. xviii. 34 . . . F.
 652. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) Matt. xviii. 21-35 F.

Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity.

653. Heaven. (Epist. Ser. I.) Phil. iii. 20 . . . A.
 654. Heavenly Conversation. (Epist. Ser. II.) Phil. iii. 20 . . . F. V.
 655. The Claims of God. (Gospel Ser. I.) Matt. xxii. 21 . . . M.

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656. The Image of God. (Gospel Ser. II.) Matt. xxii. 20 . . Ha.
 657. God's Likeness in the Soul. (Gospel Ser. III.) Matt. xxii. 20 . B.
 658. Striving Against Truth. (Gospel Ser. IV.) Matt. xxii. 15 . D. N.
 659. Why Man Bears God's Image. (Gospel Ser. V.) Matt. xxii. 20 F.
 660. Examination of Conscience. (Gospel Ser. VI.) Matt. xxii. 20 . Ha.
 661. The Tribute Money. (Gospel Ser. VII.) Matt. xxii. 19 . . H.
 662. God's Great Possession. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) Matt. xxii. 21 . F.
 663. The Tempters of God. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. xxii. 18 . . F.
 664. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) Matt. xxii. 15-23 F.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

665. The Path to Holiness. (Epist. Ser. I.) Col. i. 9. 10 . . . A.
 666. The Knowledge of God. (Epist. Ser. II.) Col. i. 10 . . . F. V.
 667. The Return of Life. (Gospel Ser. I.) Matt. ix. 25 . . . A.
 668. The Great Healer. (Gospel Ser. II.) Matt. ix. 21 . . . V.
 669. The Enemies of Jesus Christ. (Gospel Ser. III.) Matt. ix. 24 . F.
 670. The Healing Touch. (Gospel Ser. IV.) Matt. ix. 20 . . Ha.
 671. Affliction and Holiness. (Gospel Ser. V.) Matt. ix. 25 . . B.
 672. The Four Souls. (Gospel Ser. VI.) Matt. ix. 24 . . . D.
 673. The Suppliant. (Gospel Ser. VII.) Matt. ix. 18 . . . D. N.
 674. The Dead Who Bury the Dead. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) Matt. ix. 23 F.
 675. The Economy of Faith. (Gospel Ser. IX.) Matt. ix. 22 . . Ha.
 676. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) Matt. ix. 18-27 . F.

Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

677. Seeking after God. (Epist. Ser. I.) Jer. xxiii. 6 . . . A.
 678. Christian Days. (Epist. Ser. II.) Jer. xxiii. 7 . . . F. V.
 679. The Spirit of the Miracle. (Gospel Ser. I.) John vi. 12 . . D. N.
 680. Residuary Sins. (Gospel Ser. II.) John vi. 13 . . . Ha.
 681. The Five Loaves. (Gospel Ser. III.) John vi. 9 . . . H.
 682. The Old Prophet and the New. (Gospel Ser. IV.) John vi. 9 . C.
 683. The Bread of Doctrine. (Gospel Ser. V.) John vi. 9 . . A.
 684. Phases of Faith. (Gospel Ser. VI.) John vi. 5 . . . V.
 685. Spiritual Increase. (Gospel Ser. VII.) John vi. 12 . . . F.
 686. Grace before Meat. (Gospel Ser. VIII.) John vi. 11 . . M.
 687. The Lovingkindness of Jesus Christ. (Gospel Ser. IX.) John vi. 5 C.
 688. The Lessons of the Gospel. (Gospel Ser. X.) John vi. 5-15 . F.

SERMON 339.

THE ASCENSION AN ASSUMPTION.—(*The Feast of the Ascension. Ser. I.*)

“He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”—*S. Mark*
xvi. 19.

Introduction.—Four causes of Ascension according to the philosophers. 1) Inferior power, as the latent power in the root which forces up the plant above the soil. The humility of Jesus Christ, which so exalted Him. (Phil. ii. 8, 9.) 2) Superior power, which is attractive, as the sun draws up water and vegetation. The compassion of the Lord, which drew Him towards our infirmities, and now draws us upwards to His glory. (John xii. 32.) 3) Interior expulsive power, as that which forces water upwards in springs and fissures. By his own power He ascended, that He might force us up with Him. (John xiv. 2.) 4) Exterior promotive power, by means of which, as by a ladder, man can mount on high. Jesus Christ is the way to heaven. This assumption leads to four consequences.

I. *A Reparation.*—The Ascension repaired angelic ruin. Like Joshua (Josh. xiv. 3), having crossed over the Jordan of our mortality, destroying the kingdom of His enemies, and leading in a new people to supply their places; ordaining the chorus of Apostles, the order of prophets; patriarchs, martyrs, doctors, confessors, hermits, virgins, and saints. The number of the Angels is recruited by the company of the redeemed. As the good replace the bad in the moral world, so in the world of grace do the redeemed replace the fallen.

II. *A Reconciliation.*—(Heb. ix. 24; Eph. ii. 5-10).—The Ascension work of the Lord is one of perpetual intercession. (Heb. vii. 25.) His work on earth was very short: His heavenly work is still going on.

III. *A Demonstration.*—(Ps. xvi. 11).—Jacob marries in Mesopotamia, remains there thirty-three years (Gen. xxxi. 18), and goes back with all his possessions. The Lord remains thirty-three years on earth, and then He ascends to gather His family to His own land.

IV. *A Ministration of grace and glory.*—If we, like Elisha, see Jesus Christ, the true Elijah, ascend in His chariot of love, we shall gain His spirit. (2 Kings ii. 9, 10.)

Epilogue.—Make this Ascension your own.

SERMON 340.

THE ASCENDED LORD.—(*The Feast of the Ascension.*
Ser. II.)

“Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?”—*Acts i. 11.*

Introduction.—Great rejoicings and sacrifices and largesses when the ark was brought up from the house of Obed-Edom to Jerusalem. (2 Sam. vi. 12-20.) Jesus Christ, the true Ark of the Eternal Covenant, is this day brought into the heavenly Jerusalem. Let us rejoice, offer ourselves in sacrifice to God, and give of our alms as a blessing to God's people. We gaze up into heaven, seeking with loving, earnest hearts to follow the ascended Lord, with—

I. *Admiration.*—No like event was ever seen since the foundation of the world. Enoch and Elijah ascended to Paradise, but not to heaven; and they ascended by the help of God and the Angels, but not their own might. The Holy Angels, smitten with wonder, ask (Isa. lxiii. 1), when bidden (Ps. xxiv. 7)). They ask again, and receive this answer (Ps. xxiv. 8-10). With adoring wonder we must gaze upwards at Him our Lord. (Ps. viii. 1.)

II. *Holy joy and congratulation.*—(John xiv. 28.) “Ye would rejoice,” as Jacob did when he found that Joseph was yet alive. (Gen. xlv. 28.) We have our part and lot in this matter (John xx. 17); it is our festival rather than that of the angels.

III. *Fervent desire.*—(Coloss. iii. 1.)—As all Jacob's desire was towards Joseph in Egypt; for (Matt. vi. 21.) The needle magnetized points to the pole; the soul magnetized by Divine grace points to Jesus Christ. Desire to—1) join; 2) see; 3) rest with Jesus Christ.

IV. *A contempt for worldly things.*—(Coloss. iii. 2.)—1) As wanting the presence of the Loved One; 2) as being unworthy to be compared with the blessings of Jesus Christ.

V. *Faith and Hope.*—(John xiv. 2; Eph. ii. 6.)—Looking one day to be where He now is: in—1) glory; 2) immortality; 3) happiness.

VI. *Holiness of Life.*—(Ps. xxiv. 3, 4.)—Heaven receives alone the holy, the simple, and the just.

Epilogue.—The lessons of Ascension Day are lessons for every day of our lives.

SERMON 341.

THE PLACE OF THE ASCENSION.—(*The Feast of the Ascension. Ser. III.*)

“He was taken up.”—*Acts* i. 9.

Introduction.—When Elijah ascended, his mantle with a double portion of his spirit fell upon Elisha. (2 Kings ii. 13.) When the Lord ascended, it is an old tradition that He left the marks of His feet, remaining to this very day, upon the Mount of Ascension for a memorial. It is quite certain that He left an Ascension blessing with His disciples. The place of His Ascension is full of meaning for us. It was at—

I. *Bethany.*—(Luke xxiv. 50.)—He ascended from—1) ‘The house of obedience,’ in which is contained the highest virtue which leads man with a simple step to Jesus Christ. The obedient are His sheep, and His last care. (John xxi. 16.) Even S. Peter He placed under this law. (Ib. v. 18.) The first act of Eliezer to Rebekah (Gen. xxiv. 47) was to teach obedience, by the earrings; which the Israelites broke off when they made a molten calf. (Exod. xxxii. 2.) 2) ‘The house of affliction,’ in which the Magdalene wept over the feet of the Lord; and Jesus Christ Himself wept over Lazarus. Such is the house of the Church Militant. (John xvi. 20.) Obedience and sorrow humble, in order to exalt.

II. *The Mount of Olives.*—1) It commanded a view of Jerusalem. Spiritual mount, gives a glimpse of ‘the Vision of Peace.’ We ascend by heavenly thought. 2) He gave a sight of the Dead Sea: the world is dead, dying, and corrupt. We must ascend with S. Paul. (Phil. iii. 8; Gal. vi. 14.) 3) It was high, removed from the turmoil of life. We ascend above daily care and strife. 4) It was His mount of suffering. (Luke xxiv. 26.) The way of heaven is made rough by tribulations, persecutions, and temptations. 5) It will be the mount of judgment. (Zech. xiv. 4.) The valley of Jehoshaphat is beneath its shadow. Joy and fear are mingled in this day’s festival.

Epilogue.—A spiritual ascent can be made by all.

SERMON 342.

THE WITNESS OF THE ASCENSION.—(*The Feast of the Ascension.* Ser. IV.)

“After the Lord had spoken unto them.”—*S. Mark* xvi. 19.

Introduction.—The Ascension was a revelation of the Lord, a fitting sequel to a life of wonders; the completion of a life of grace. The Ascension witnessed to—

I. *The power of the Lord.*—‘The Lord:’ He walked upon the sea, its Lord; as Lord of the earth, He shook it at His Crucifixion, and opened the graves; Lord of Hades, He went down into hell. Now He is Lord of the air (*Acts* i. 9), and Lord of heaven, since He opened heaven; and inhabitants of heaven, the holy angels, come to do Him honour and service. We rejoice in the might of Him Who once for our sakes became so helpless and so weak.

II. *The familiarity of the Lord.*—1) He assembled Himself and, probably, ate with His disciples (*Acts* i. 4), as friends share in a farewell feast. 2) He blessed them, as their Bishop. (*Luke* xxiv. 51.) 3) He instructed and reproved them as their Master (*Mark* xvi. 14), at a time too when they needed comfort, to show them that no season is unapt for correction.

III. *The sublimity of the Lord.*—‘Received up into heaven.’ 1) Enoch translated by the grace of God as the Israelites were brought over the Red Sea. 2) Elijah was progressing in grace, for the grace of God is a chariot of fire, progressing as did the Israelites from place to place. 3) Ascension in mind and spirit to God, as *S. Paul* (2 *Cor.* xii. 34). 4) Ascension into the heavenly country, as Jesus Christ went into heaven, as the Jews after all their battle rested in Jerusalem, ‘the Vision of Peace.’

IV. *The majesty of the Lord.*—1) As being our glorified Head; 2) our faithful Friend; 3) our wise Advocate; 4) our Forerunner.

Epilogue.—Seek to know Jesus Christ by faith, then hereafter we shall ascend with Him to sight.

SERMON 343.

THE OPENED HEAVENS.—(*The Feast of the Ascension.*
Ser. V.)

“While they beheld, He was taken up.”—*Acts i. 9.*

Introduction.—The Ascension seems to be so far removed from our common life, that it is not equally regarded by us, as are Christmas and Easter Days. For the same reason the Bible is looked upon rather as a guide to heaven than as a rule of life for earth; as a book for Sundays and not for week days. Both views are partially mistaken. The disciples were humble men, yet they were all united in one common likeness, they followed in the footsteps of their Lord, and so for them heaven was opened. When Jesus Christ ascended, they caught a glimpse of that glorious place; and that sight sustained them under all their after sorrows and trials. So is it with every real follower of the Lord, since for him “heaven is truly opened.” Heaven is opened to the faithful—

I. *In their common life.*—So with the worthies of old (Heb. xi. 13, 14), their glimpses of heaven taught them that they were strangers on this earth, and made them strong to endure. (Heb. xi. 27.) If it was so to the faithful before and under the Law, how much ought it to be so with us who are sons of God, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ.

II. *In special trouble.*—Jacob’s flight from home at the time of his doubt, weakness, and sorrow; for him at his greater need, heaven was opened (Gen. xxviii. 13); and Jesus Christ stood at the top of the ladder to encourage him to ascend.

III. *In the hour of death.*—Case of S. Stephen. (Acts vii. 57.) He knew that death was all but come to him, the sight of a heaven opened took away all fear of agony, all desire to escape from the crown of martyrdom. The sight of heaven was as the arm of Jesus Christ bearing him up.

Epilogue.—Follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, and for you in various ways heaven will be opened.

SERMON 344.

HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR—(*The Feast of the Ascension. Ser. VI.*)

“He that descended is the same also that ascended.”—*Eph.* iv. 10.

Introduction.—The way of descent is also the way of ascent ; for the path of humility is also the path of glory. The descensions of Jesus Christ form a ladder with seven rounds. He descended—

I. *From the Father into the Virgin.*—A step of infinite humility, from the bosom of the Father into the womb of the Virgin. (*Phil.* ii. 8.) It involved—1) a conformity; 2) parentage; 3) servitude; 4) death. The vastest descent of all.

II. *From the womb of the Virgin to the Manger.*—A step of real hardship. Consider the infancy of His childhood, the meanness of His apparel, the hardness of the manger. (*Luke* ii. 12.)

III. *From the manger into the world.*—A step of great poverty. Jesus Christ was poor in life, in death, and after death. (*Matt.* viii. 20.)

IV. *From the world unto the Cross.*—A step of great love. (*John* xv. 13.) On the Cross He was full of the fire of love.

V. *From the Cross into the tomb.*—A step of great pity to visit those fathers in Hades, and deprived of the Vision of God. (*Isa.* ix. 2.) And to comfort and enlighten them.

VI. *From Hades to earth again.*—A step of great happiness. The bands of death were all broken. Infirmary is strength; mortality is eternity; contumely has passed onwards to glory.

VII. *From earth to heaven.*—A step of great majesty. For Angels, Fathers, the fairest things of heaven, all joined in that Ascension procession.

Epilogue.—Despise not the day of small things, and great things shall be thine.

SERMON 345.

THE FINAL ASCENSION—(*The Feast of the Ascension.*
Ser. VII.)

“This same Jesus, Which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.”—*Acts i. 11.*

Introduction.—There are six circumstances in the Ascension which will be repeated at the Day of Judgment. Jesus Christ will come as He went. At His first coming He by grace restored the soul; at His second, He will restore the body too. At His Ascension there was—

I. *A glorious association.*—He went up in company, in a glorious company who had come to meet Him, of saints and angels, spirits and souls of the righteous, with Abel and the rest. He will come with the same company to judge the world; and at His coming heaven will be emptied. Before this company, all unpardoned sin will be exposed, condemned, and punished.

II. *A hearty shout.*—The Son is returned safe from a barbarous and sinful world; having warred against devils, infidels, sinners, and death; wounded, yet victorious. (*Ps. xlvii. 5.*) At His second coming (*1 Thess. iv. 16*) a terrible voice: it will arouse the dead, it will summon all. So live as to hear it without fear.

III. *A full congregation.*—Apostles, disciples, and holy women assembled at the Mount of Olives (*1 Cor. xv. 6*); so of the assembly in the valley of Jehoshaphat. (*Joel iii. 14*; *Matt. xxv. 32.*) May we be present amid that company on His right hand.

IV. *A gracious allocution.*—The last words before Ascension were full of power, grace, and blessing. (*Luke xxiv. 51*; *Acts i. 8.*) At second coming (*Matt. xxv. 34*); also (*Ib. v. 23.*) as applied to a different case. Partakers of the Ascension blessing shall receive a benediction at the Judgment.

V. *A stern reproof.*—(*Mark xvi. 14.*) To those in that state at second coming. (*Matt. xxv. 41.*) These words will belong to the Jews and to false Christians. (*Zech. xii. 10.*)

VI. *A just retribution.*—(*Eph. iv. 8.*)—So at the Judgment will He render to men both good and evil gifts, according to their works. (*Matt. xvi. 27.*) Let us practise. (*Gal. vi. 10.*)

Epilogue.—Duly keep Ascension, and be prepared for the Judgment.

SERMON 346.

SPIRITUAL ASCENSION.—(*The Feast of the Ascension*, Ser. VIII.)

“There were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold.”—*2 Chron.* ix. 18.

Introduction.—These six steps denote the six steps of our spiritual ascension; and by the footstool, or seventh step, the Ascensions of Jesus Christ are prefigured. These Ascensions are—

I. *From original sin to a state of innocence.*—By the Baptism, after which our Blessed Lord ascended. For—1) the heaven opened; 2) the Spirit was given; 3) His Sonship was declared.

II. *From actual sin to a state of penitence.*—Lot from Sodom. (*Gen.* xix. 16; *Gen.* xxxv. 1.) Go to the House of God, avoiding occasions of sin. Typified (*Matt.* ix. 1.) ‘Ascended into a ship.’

III. *To a life of righteousness.*—This life of holiness justified by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. Type, Transfiguration on Tabor.

IV. *To the tranquillity of patience.*—A high step, which leads to ineffable tranquillity of mind. The type our Blessed Lord saying (*Matt.* xx. 18).

V. *To the citadel of contemplation.*—This is a rare step to be gained in the present life. Signified by our Blessed Lord casting the buyers out of the temple. (*Matt.* xxi. 12.)

VI. *To the fulness of love.*—Which causes the soul to ascend to the centre of love: the greater the love the higher is the ascent. Type: Abigail’s marriage with David. (*1 Sam.* xxv. 42.) Type in our Blessed Lord. (*John* xv. 13.)

VII. *To the glory of the heavenly country.*—There is the golden footstool of the Lord. Types: Enoch, Elijah, and Jesus Christ.

Epilogue.—O happy ascension of the ascending heart, which, by slow and successive steps, at last attains to the God of gods in Zion!

SERMON 347.

THE JOY OF THE ASCENSION.—(*The Feast of the Ascension.* Ser. IX.)

“He was received up into Heaven.”—*Mark* xvi. 19.

Introduction.—The Ascension is a great festival of pure and unmixed joy. (Ps. xlvii. 5.) ‘The chariots of God are twenty thousand;’ the cloud of ministers by which He was surrounded. (Ps. lxxviii. 17.) All were filled with joy for Him Who had so lowly descended, and was now so grandly ascending. The Ascension of our Blessed Lord was a joy—

I. *To God the Father.*—A most loving event for Him, to receive back again His ‘Beloved Son in Whom,’ etc. (Matt. iii. 17.) No limit to the reciprocal love between the Father and the Son. This love is—1) attractive; 2) penetrative; 3) unitative. (Dion.) As the right hand is the place of dignity, representing the nobler part of the body, so is the Son joined to the Father by a most noble union. (Ps. lxxv. 4.) ‘Choolest,’ by personal union; ‘causest to approach,’ drawn by love.

II. *To Jesus Christ ascending.*—The Ascension was excellent; it being wrought by his own power, in order that the inferior angels might wonder, saying (Isa. lxiii. 1). The ‘wine-press’ is the Cross, and all His suffering. Like Elijah ascending, He gives the garment of His humanity to His disciples, by which they can divide the waters of tribulation of this mortal life. (2 Kings ii. 13.) When the glorified body is said to be carried by angels, clouds, and the like, this is in token of honour, not of need.

III. *To the accompanying company.*—Joy to those who ascended with the Lord. 1) By the vision of the New Man. 2) By the reparation of the angels’ ruin, which the Fall had made. 3) By the human companionship thus established. If (Luke xv. 7) be true, much more when a Holy One ascends. If the angels sang ‘Glory’ at His birth, how grand will be their song at His Ascension!

IV. *To the assembly of men yet militant.*—1) Joyful by the exaltation of their human nature. 2) Fruitful from the mission of the Holy Ghost, and the intercession of Jesus Christ, and the place he prepares for us.

Epilogue.—Ascend in thought with Jesus Christ.

SERMON 348.

THE BLESSING LEFT BEHIND.—(*The Feast of the Ascension. Ser. X.*)

“The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me.”—*Job xxix. 13.*

Introduction.—The Lord was often ‘ready to perish’ with toil, travail, and hunger; in His Agony, Passion and Death. He blessed man in His birth, His life, His words, and deeds. His last earthly act was one of blessing; as His life was in its fulness and continuance, so was it in its close. (Luke xxiv. 51.) The holy departed all leave a blessing behind them. The Lord in ascending left a special and a threefold blessing.

I. *Of hope.*—(Ps. lv. 17.)—‘Evening’ on the Cross; ‘Morning’ He rose from the dead; at ‘noon’ He ascended. Sun at noon in highest point of heavens, so was He at His Ascension; the dread of sorrow, darkness, and sadness, hath passed away for ever. The bright example and life, which was summed up in His last blessing, was full of hope. The earnest of a new hope to men.

II. *Of courage.*—The Mount of Ascension was close to Jerusalem; the triumph of ascending glory was manifested at the place of former sufferings. Holy lives gain their very triumphs in the place of their struggles and humiliations. We gain courage by noting how, all obstacles being overcome, the righteous at length pass onward to their rest and glory.

III. *Of love and peace.*—1) Of hands. *a*) Closed, as Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh the sons of Joseph. (Gen. xlviii. 13.) *b*) Extended, as Moses’ were on the mount during the war with Amalek. (Exod. xvii. 11.) *c*) Forming the sign of the Cross, according to a tradition, like Aaron blessed the High Priest. 2) Of cloud. As a cloud He ascended from the sea of this world’s sin and sorrow. Law given in a cloud, so the Presence in Solomon’s Temple. Cloud melts into rain and dew.

Epilogue.—1) The departure corresponds with the life. 2) Live so as to leave a blessing behind you.

SERMON 349.

THE HONOUR OF GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“That God, in all things, may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”—1 *Peter* iv. 11.

Introduction.—God made the world for the use and benefit of man, giving to him land, water, fruitful seasons, and preparing a heaven for him when he should leave earth. So (1 *Cor.* iii. 21) also for His own glory to show His power in Creation, His wisdom in governing, His mercy in providing, and His justice in rewarding and punishing, God dwells in the palace of His eternity; but He has made a heaven and earth for us to dwell in, where we may glorify Him by loving, serving, and seeking to be like Him. We must give to Him—

I. *Supernal love.*—Loving Him before either father or mother, etc. (Matt. x. 37.) A feast of love when God’s law is fulfilled by us as far as possible, under every sacrifice. When under every temptation, we will neither tamper with sin nor give way to sensual pleasures. Hence (John xiv. 21.)

II. *Temporal praise.*—We are taught in youth and prepared by education for our several callings in after life; specially educated for particular professions. Our future life is to be one of praise; so lessons of praise should be learned now. (Ps. lxxxiv. 4.) The office of praise is to be learned on earth, as a preparation for heaven. Many, alas, learn the office of blasphemy instead. (Rev. xvi. 9.)

III. *Virtual subjection of body.*—The body is a kind of camp which is full of rebellion, to which God has entrusted the soul as a guard. This camp must be disciplined by vigils, fastings, etc., for (Gen. viii. 21; Rom. viii. 7). Hence S. Paul (1 *Cor.* ix. 27; Rom. xii. 1); and he exhorts (1 *Cor.* vi. 20).

IV. *Headship over temporal goods.*—By almsgiving. God is glorified by acts of charity done to His poor members. (Prov. iii. 9, 10.)

Epilogue.—Glory is due from man to God. (Rom. xiii. 7.) It is a debt—1) of gratitude; 2) of love; 3) of prudence.

SERMON 350.

A SWEET PRESENCE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)“Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.”—1 *Peter* iv. 7.

Introduction.—These words strike a note of Pentecostal preparation, which consists in—1) Abstraction; 2) Internal simplicity; 3) Inhabitation; and 4) Unity of the interior man in order that the exterior man may be adorned with natural graces, the inferior powers with moral qualities, and the higher powers with theological virtues. Seasons such as these are as the months of February and March, during which the tares and weeds are rooted up, and the pruning and preparation take place for the ripening effects of the summer's sun. We are to prepare for the Presence; which is—

I. *Sweet.*—The Presence of the Holy Ghost a most sweet fruition. When the soul is united with God and illumined by its splendours, there is a feast prepared of the most precious foods and sweetest odours, which the experienced know are very delightful and desirable. Nature when injured looks within and seeks to cure herself; so the medicine of the Spirit, being internally applied, makes a singular sweetness and an inward health.

II. *Disciplinal.*—This sweet Presence is not to be rested in here. The command is, ‘Be sober and watch,’ not Sleep and rest in sweetness. The sleeper is inactive like the dead. The sober vigilantly, amiably, and rationally does his duty; no place for torpor or idleness. The light of reason is to be used for diligent self-inspection. S. Peter only tasted one drop of this sweetness and said (Matt. xvii. 4). Yet it is not allowed to others, allured by this sweetness and interior consolation, to fall into an evil and pernicious liberty and security. Nature feeling this sweetness turns itself subtly to a false complacency.

III. *Prayerful.*—This sweet Presence is expressed in prayer. Because prayer is the ascension of the mind to God, by which with love and an intimate desire it subjects itself humbly to God. Heavenly beings pray, their whole selves being carried to God.

Epilogue.—A living prayer leads to conformity to God's most holy will.

SERMON 351.

SOBRIETY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. III.)

“Be ye sober.”—1 *Peter* iv. 7.

Introduction.—Sobriety is here used as equal to prudence, wisdom, and thoughtfulness in general. This ‘sobriety’ expresses a careful habit of soul, not of body. It represents that wisdom which pleases God our Father (*Prov.* x. 1); that understanding which smites and devours Satan (*Job* xxvi. 1), the proud cunning serpent, like Moses’ rod. (*Exod.* vii. 12.) Sobriety is opposed to the foolishness of sin, which loses all, and makes no effort to recover a lost possession. We are here exhorted to four kinds of sobriety or prudence.

I. *Foresight*.—(*Prov.* vi. 6-8; x. 5.)—Joseph during years of plenty. (*Gen.* xli. 48, 49.) The sober or prudent administers for three periods. Sobriety rules the present, it provides for the future, it recalls the lessons of experience from the past. Sin destroys all foresight: the sinner lives in the present, and puts the future away out of his sight.

II. *Circumspection*.—(*Prov.* iv. 23.)—The sobriety that preserves a mean, and avoids extremes, does not flag into extravagance in order to avoid covetousness, or into rashness in order to avoid weakmindedness. These circumspections prevent us from flying to poverty and trouble in this world, that we may become eternally poor and miserable hereafter. Want of this sobriety is the cause of all our inconsistency in conduct.

III. *Caution or discretion*.—Which enables us to distinguish vices from virtues, and what is real from what is apparent: as cruelty clothed in justice; as carelessness called good-nature. (*Isa.* v. 20.)

IV. *Docility*.—Taking care lest, instructing others, we leave ourselves in ignorance; we confound the unknown with the known; we too curiously search into what is hidden.

Epilogue.—‘Sobriety’ saves us from many troubles here; it keeps us from sin, which would condemn us hereafter.

SERMON 352.

TRUTH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth.”—*John* xv. 26.

Introduction.—Truth is a great gift, an eternal reality in this failing, deceitful world. Truth implies all that is real, certain, and perfect. The office of the Spirit of Truth in this world is a threefold one.

I. *To correct what is false.*—All things in the world are false and deceitful. (*Jer.* xvi. 19.) World says all good things are to be enjoyed; God says that the delights of this world were not created for present enjoyment, but to teach us how much more delightful are the things of heaven. If the flesh has pleasures, how much greater are the pleasures of mind. As heaven is more glorious than earth, so much better is it to be exalted in heaven than on earth. Sacrifices were all figurative; and temporal promises were but figures of eternal rewards. World seen, one continuous parable of world unseen. Riches promise satisfaction, and leave a want; honours, exaltation; but they bring dejection. (*Isa.* xxix. 8.)

II. *To certify to that which is insecure.*—Fire is known by its sparks. Sparks of holy men are—1) Fervent desires. (*Ps.* xlii. 1, 2.) 2) Fervent words. 3) Works. (*Job* xxxvii. 17.) Of Saints (*Ezek.* i. 7), ‘sparkled’ as unweighed down by earthliness; ‘brass,’ as sounding in God’s ears; ‘burnished’ or ‘glowing,’ inflamed by the love of God. Sun is known by its rays. Rays: holy men are—1) The knowledge of God (*Ps.* lxii. 11); 2) of the world (*Nahum* iii. 7); 3) of themselves (*Micah* vi. 14). Rose by its odour. Scent of holy men—1) of devotion (*Rev.* v. 8); 2) of good report (*2 Cor.* ii. 15); 3) of a good conscience (*Cant.* i. 16).

III. *To perfect that which is imperfect.*—Many strive after, but few obtain, perfection. Five materials of the image from the gold to the clay (*Dan.* ii. 32, 33); these signify a fivefold decline from perfection.

Epilogue.—Avoid all shams and hypocrisy. Study—1) to find out; 2) to know; 3) to love and honour truth.

SERMON 353.

THE OFFENCE OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. II.)

“Ye should not be offended.”—*John* xvi. 1.

Introduction.—(*Jer.* xv. 10.)—Such might have been the Lord’s lamentation over all the insult, wrong, and calumny which has been heaped upon Himself, His apostles, and His followers from the beginning. It happened as He predicted. (*Matt.* xxvi. 31.) Why should this be so, seeing that the Lord did all that was noble and loving to man, and that His faith was truly void of offence towards God and towards man? His offence was, that—

I. *He taught contrary to the world.*—(*Mark* i. 27.)—1) A new doctrine of love, hope, and simpleness, as opposed to the old worn-out traditions of the Jew and the philosopher. 2) A spiritual doctrine, without forms or ceremonies. (*Matt.* xv. 2.) 3) Supernatural teaching. (*John* vi. 60.) 4) Wholly unworldly. (*John* viii. 23.) A perpetual conflict of inclination, feeling, early training, and the faith of Jesus Christ. Even now His teaching in its simplicity and spirituality, is an offence to many.

II. *He led a middle life.*—Neither over rigid, nor unduly relaxed. (*Matt.* xi. 18, 19.) Popular feeling is ever in favour of extremes; they produce singularity and affectation; they partake of weakness. Extremes are ever courted, yet they are ever unreal.

III. *He did many wonderful works.*—Over nature, over man, and over the spirit world. He was wonderful in His speech and wisdom. Envy always leads to reproach. The good and holy are ever a reproach to the evil.

IV. *He suffered an ignominious death.*—(*Matt.* xxvi. 31.) Two altars in Solomon’s temple: one of incense within the temple overlaid with gold; the other of burnt-offering without in the court, where the fumes and blood of the sacrifices could find an escape. (*1 Kings* vi. 22.) In the Lord there was a double sacrifice; of a lovely life, and of a human body; upon the altars of incense and burnt-offering.

Epilogue.—The Lord is many-sided; He is as He appeals to different hearts. Hence to many he gave offence.

SERMON 354.

THE OFFICES OF TRUTH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

"These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me."—*John* xvi. 3.

Introduction.—Righteousness and truth are alike persecuted by an ungodly world. Jonah was the son of Amittai, or of truth. (*Jonah* i. 1.) He goes into the ship, is tossed on the billows, cast out of the vessel, thrown into the sea, taken up by a whale, cast forth on the dry ground, and sits under a gourd which withers away. Jonah is a type of truth, ever driven hither and thither. Because Micaiah told the truth to Ahab he was to be punished: 'Put this fellow in prison.' (*1 Kings* xxii. 27.) Nathan prudently gilded the pill of truth in a parable, before presenting it to David. (*2 Sam.* xii. 17.) Why does the world hate the truth and despise the spirit of truth? Because truth—

I. *Condemns sin.*—Truth allows that only to be good which is honest and according to the law of God. Sin hates the truth as a diseased eye shuns the light. Prexaspes told Cambyzes he was too much given to wine. Cambyzes shot his son through the heart to show he was sober. (*Herod* iii. 34.) Old fable of two idol oracles in temple: one told the truth of a thief, who came and broke its head; the other idol would not convict, a second thief; saying, 'The times are bad, but men are worse; and if you speak the truth your head will be broken.'

II. *Convicts the sinner.*—Truth shows the sinner—1) who and what he is; 2) what he is doing; 3) whither he is going. Sincere preacher convicts (*Gal.* iv. 13, 15, 16) as telling men the truth with all plainness of speech.

III. *As a stranger in the world.*—Truth, coming from heaven to earth, finds no dwelling, and remaining in the streets, is trodden down under men's feet. (*Isa.* lix. 14.) Truth knows herself to be a stranger on earth, easily recognised amongst foreigners and enemies. 'She has her race, seat, hope, grace, and dignity in heaven.' (*Tertul.*) *Babrius' Fables.* Pt. I., F. cxxiv.; Pt. II., F. xxxi.)

IV. *Is unconquerable.*—Hated and subject to envy, truth ever prevails. Joseph's brethren hated it (*Gen.* xxxvii. 18, 19), yet it prevailed. Pharisees hated it. (*Matt.* xxviii. 63, 64.)

Epilogue.—Truth is a fair daughter and true; follow her. Jesus Christ is the truth.

SERMON 355.

THREE OFFICES OF THE HOLY GHOST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth, He shall testify of Me.”
—*John* xv. 26.

Introduction.—The promise of the mission of the Holy Ghost is related to-day, its fulfilment is commemorated next Sunday; in order that His hidden mission in the hearts of the faithful (1 Cor. xii. 7) may find them duly prepared to receive Him. His mission to the soul is a threefold one : of—

I. *Comfort.*—1) Not to those who comfort themselves with a vain consolation. (Luke vi. 24.) 2) Not to those who sorrow for worldly things which work death. 3) Not to the proud who, like the mountains of Gilboa, are left dry. (2 Sam. i. 21.) 4) Not to the idle and careless. (2 Cor. xi. 20.) He comforts—1) The sad and broken-hearted. (Matt. v. 4.) 2) The penitent, who has cast away the sinful comfort of the world. 3) The earnest soul, fighting and struggling against sin. (Rev. ii. 17.) He especially comforts—1) By mitigating temptation. (Isa. xliii. 2; Dan. iii. 25.) 2) By giving strength. (Luke xxiv. 49; 1 Cor. x. 13.) 3) By infusing sweetness. 4) By showing the use of trial; as he did to S. Stephen. (Rom. viii. 18; James i. 12.)

II. *Illumination.*—(John xvi. 26.)—‘Teach you all things.’ ‘The Spirit of Truth.’ (Isa. xxx. 20.) ‘Bread of adversity :’ lessons hard to learn, difficult and obscure, acquired with much labour. ‘Water of affliction :’ lessons of contrition, tears of repentance, discipline of sorrow. Truth lying under the shadow of figures, revealing the world’s vanity, hypocrisy, and fraud.

III. *Witness.*—‘He shall testify of Me.’ By—1) Coming from Him. 2) Promised by Him. 3) Enduing His followers with strength, wisdom (Luke xxi. 15), power of working miracles, and of preaching. (Mark xvi. 20.) He witnesses to the soul within.

Epilogue.—His Holy Spirit coming into the soul brings all His blessed fruits with Him. (Gal. v. 22.)

SERMON 356.

IGNORANCE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

[“They have not known the Father nor Me.”—*John* xv. 3.]

Introduction.—(1 Cor. ii. 8.)—The ‘princes,’ or rulers of this world, acted for the best, as they thought in their ignorance. Ignorance is the parent of a prolific brood of sad and sorrowful offspring. Limited powers of understanding; harsh judgment; debased and degraded affections; the absence of all improvement, moral, spiritual or social. These are some of its dire effects; but only some. Ignorance of self is the beginning of sin, if God is, indeed, an abyss to be shunned. Ignorance is the mount which original sin inflicts upon our race. We note three kinds of ignorance.

I. *Natural ignorance.*—This is the first of them all, natural to us all. Cursed soul like cursed soil can only be made fruitful by toil and care. Knowledge, like every good gift of God, must be worked for. Uneducated man be ever so clever, is but a child when compared with an ordinary man who is well educated. Natural ignorance can be overcome by divine grace. If we seek a teaching spirit, it will be given to each of us. A law of ignorance came in with the Fall.

II. *Wilful ignorance.*—Proceeds from our negligence and wickedness; it is the punishment that habitual sin brings with it. (*John* iii. 19.) It is—1) a hardened state, no desire to be better; content with the low level of present attainment; 2) an unprogressive state; all are moving forward whilst we are standing still; 3) a proud self-contented state.

III. *Invincible ignorance.*—This is the excusing of sin and darkness and error; the defending of all that is bad and wrong. It implies the withdrawal of God’s Spirit; it represents the foretaste of an eternal ignorance for ever in hell, and of all that it most concerns us to know.

Epilogue.—Truth in all things makes us free, in things divine and human too. In the other world, the night of ignorance will be exchanged for the pure light of the day of knowledge.

SERMON 357.

INGRATITUDE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.

“They shall put you out of the synagogues.”—*John* xvi. 2.

Introduction.—Ingratitude was the one prevailing sin of the Jews. So God bade Isaiah begin his prophecy (*Isa.* i. 2) by mentioning this sin above all the others he remembered, to show how greatly He abhorred it. His bitter words sufficiently express His indignation at it. Heaven and earth are called to witness that the ungrateful are more stupid and sordid than the brutes. Ingratitude is the root of all spiritual wickedness ; a dry wind burning up all goodness ; a stone which stays the flow of the fountain of God’s mercy. We can all return thanks to God, although we cannot repay Him. Ingratitude renders our use of God’s benefits a sin. The ungrateful form three classes.

I. *The barren and unfruitful.*—Such with a cheerful and ready mind accept all God’s mercies and blessings, and yet do not refer them to God ; they take them all as a matter of course. When any one of them is withdrawn they complain and murmur as being hardly done by. Careless souls are these, who see no providential hand leading them, and are grateful for no guiding hand of the Almighty. They receive God’s infinite goodness as a kind of prescriptive right.

II. *The senseless and conceited.*—Such look with infinite satisfaction upon the blessings they enjoy. They delight in their success in life ; they narrate their escapes from peril and danger ; but they attribute all this to their own energy, power, talent, prudence ; forgetful that without God’s fatherly love and care, all their endeavours would end in vain.

III. *The depraved.*—Such abuse all God’s gifts, and turn His blessings into curses ; they prostitute every sense and every faculty of soul and body ; and as they suffer they blame God for their own sin.

Epilogue.—Let your thoughts and questions be (*Ps.* cxvi. 12) ; and the answer, Myself, body, soul, and spirit my reasonable service.

SERMON 353.**SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.—(Holy Gospel. Ser. VII.)**

“Will think that he doeth God service.”—*John* xvi. 2.

Introduction.—Without a right intention, a man's work will be hopelessly and utterly wrong: it will be against instead of being for God; for the soul is in darkness. Immediately at the old creation light was produced, without which there could be neither glory nor beauty in created things; so is it in the new creation of regeneration, when God sends His light into the darkened abyss of the sinful soul, and reveals to it its most wretched state, the dangers which surround it and the doom which was before it. As a three days' darkness in Egypt (*Exod.* x. 12) so is there a threefold darkness in the soul of the sinner, during which he sees not heavenly happiness, earthly unhappiness, and the bitterness of hell. Blindness of Saul (*Acts* ix. 9) implies an ignorance or hardness of heart in respect to those things which are needful for salvation.

I. *Two classes of the spiritually dark.*—1) The blind from defect of light; who love to skulk in the darkness of ignorance, that they may indulge their vices; who will not see. (*Ps.* xxxvi. 3.) Such God punishes by withdrawing His grace and supernatural light. 2) The blinded from excess of light: they become over curious in divine things; who place reason before faith, who only believe one, that which they can understand. (*Rom.* i. 21, 22; *Coloss.* ii. 8.)

II. *Three shades of darkness.*—1) Shadow of first sin which is the work of darkness. Sin produces darkness; without sin all is light. 2) A deeper shadow which gathers blackness from a false tranquillity which the sinner gains by sinning. 3) The blackness of darkness, when all grace is resisted; God is mocked, and punishment alone remains.

III. *The effects of spiritual darkness.*—1) It is sin, and as such is a hindrance to salvation. 2) It is the cause of more sin, and is a ground of condemnation. 3) It is a punishment for sin, the heaviest punishment with which God can afflict the sinner.

Epilogue.—Follow Jesus Christ. (*John* viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 46.) Then will you fulfil your calling (*Eph.* iv. 8; 1 *Thess.* v. 5), and be light in the world.

SERMON 350.

OBSTINACY.—(*Holy Gospel.* Ser. VIII.)

“Whosoever kilieth you will think that he doeth God service.”—*John* xvi. 2.

Introduction.—Unconvinced by all the testimony to the Divinity of the Son of God, the Jew was obstinate in his hatred of the Lord and His disciples and followers. This obstinacy cost many lives, and caused much sorrow. Just as David’s obstinacy (1 Chron. xxi. 8), which was prompted by Satan, slew seventy thousand of his subjects. Obstinacy takes many forms. It may be—1) a standing in the way of all conviction (obsto); 2) a craven holding on to that which has been superseded or proved to be untrue; 3) a self-opinionated pleasure in resisting that which others accept with thankfulness and gratitude. There are three special ills to which obstinacy leads, viz. :—

I. *To strife and contention of words.*—An obstinate holding to one’s own opinion, especially when it is a wrong one, and is not founded on knowledge, leads to every kind of controversy and disputation, by which no good is ever gained, but rather the peace of the mind is broken, and a separation in feeling is often made between relations and friends. The obstinacy of S. Barnabas separated him from S. Paul (Acts xv. 37-39). Such were Gerar’s herdsmen (Gen. xxvi. 20, 23).

II. *To confirmation in ignorance.*—Many so pertinaciously and obstinately lean upon their own opinion and convictions, that they deny to others the right either to instruct or reprove them. They most obstinately strive against the inspirations of the Holy Ghost; resisting His interior pleading, His outward persuading, and His entire counsel; and thus thoroughly hardening the will. Such are wilful, unrepentant sinners.

III. *To justification of faults and defects.*—Obstinacy becomes like a garment (Ps. cix. 19), which covering defects, leaves its wearers incapable of cure; and being constantly worn, causes every defect to become both natural and habitual; a ‘girdle’ by which the soul is bound and tied down.

Epilogue.—Ever keep the soul open to conviction. Be like the Bereans in all things. (Acts xvii. 11.)

SERMON 360.

GOD'S WARNINGS.—(*Holy Gospel.* Ser. IX.)

“Three things have I told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them.”—*John* xvi. 4.

Introduction.—So warned, the disciples were armed, and prepared for their coming troubles. God, as a rule, warns us before He punishes us. Noah before the flood, Joseph before the Egyptian famine, Jonah before the destruction of Nineveh. Many a sickness prepares us for death; many a chastisement is sent in mercy to correct some sin. These warnings are merciful, plain, and fearful.

I. *Merciful.*—I whet my glittering sword (*Deut.* xxxii. 41), shining before striking, as lightning shines before touching. As the benighted traveller halts on edge of precipice which lightning has revealed to him, so we halt at the edge of an abyss of sin when the light of the ‘glittering sword’ is seen on high; the affections will be aroused, the conscience will be touched, and fear instilled before judgment goes forth.

II. *Plain.*—(*Rev.* vi. 2-9.)—Four horses: ‘White,’ warnings of Holy Scripture and of holy preachers. ‘Red:’ divine Nemesis which is administered by judges and magistrates of earthly laws. ‘Black:’ public judgments, war, famine, pestilence. ‘Pale:’ death, the destroyer, followed by hell. Three plain warnings before end comes. Plagues of Athens, London; Belshazzar’s warning. (*Dan.* v. 25.)

III. *Fearful.*—Jerusalem in siege by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Lord calling to repentance. His call unregarded; even the word of judgment passed. (*Isa.* xxii. 14.) Fearful end of Jerusalem.

Epilogue.—Attend to signs of God’s dealings: they are seen—1) in circumstance; 2) in conscience; 3) in presentiment. A young man promised three warnings of death in a dream: sinned after the first; was lethargic after second; and was unprepared at the third and last.

SERMON 361.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“When the Comforter is come. . . . I told you of them.”—*John* xv. 26; xvi. 4.

Introduction.—(*Eph.* vi. 17.)—These discourses were defensive swords in the hands of the Apostles. Goliath’s sword amongst the sacred furniture of the Tabernacle (2 Sam. xxi. 9), the Sword of the Word should be preserved in the tabernacle the soul; especially the words of this Gospel, in which we learn, that—

I. *Witnesses ought to be good and truthful.*—Such were S. John Baptist, Simeon, Anna, and the eleven Apostles who were with Jesus Christ from the beginning. *Lex talionis* enforced against false witnesses. (*Deut.* xix. 19.) False witness is hateful—1) to God, Who condemns perjury; 2) to the judge, who is deceived; 3) to the innocent accused, who is foully wronged. A false witness in daily life is unjust suspicion.

II. *Persecution is not to be feared.*—A good man fears no persecution by the world only for the rejection of God. Such persecution is—1) honourable; 2) foretold by the Lord; 3) brings its due reward. Sir Thomas More and S. Thomas of Canterbury undying names in England.

III. *Neither zeal nor good intention excuses sin.* Jews not to be excused for their zealous and well-intentioned persecution. Saul was punished though his intention was good. (1 Sam. xv. 26.) No excuse for the princes of this world. (1 Cor. ii. 8.) See persecution of Maximinius, and his end (*Euseb.* ix. 10). We must neither do evil with a good motive, nor good with a bad motive.

IV. *Heretics are worse than Jews and heathen.*—They are aggressive—1) spoilers of the Church; 2) debasers of her doctrine; 3) rebels to her authority and dominion. Such are free-thinkers and sectaries of all kinds.

V. *All bloodshed is to be shunned.*—(*Gen.* ix. 4-7).—‘Whoso killeth you.’ Nero at first said he knew not how to form the letters of his signature for a capital sentence: he afterwards brought to death all along his path. We are ever to employ gentle means for conversion—1) a holy example; 2) a kind admonition; 3) a plain instruction.

SERMON 362.

THE RESTING-PLACE OF THE SPIRIT.—(*Epistle.*
Ser. I.)

“It sat upon each of them.”—*Acts* ii. 3.

Introduction.—This session represents the kingly power with which God the Holy Ghost rests upon His Saints; Who wills to be as a King in His own House, that His commands may be implicitly obeyed. (*John* xiv. 15-17.) He rests upon the Holy, as He did upon the Lord. (*Isa.* xi. 2; *Matt.* iii. 16.) There are three classes upon whom He rests not.

I. *Those who despise Him.*—Such determine and will to continue in hardness of heart, having renounced all care for the mercy of God. (*Rom.* ii. 4). They refuse to listen to His pleadings, to obey His impulses; to rest under His influences. Such deny the power of the spiritual world in general, and of the Holy Spirit in particular; they believe only what they see and can understand: of them (*Heb.* x. 28, 29). Such despise—1) Revelation; 2) Sacraments; 3) ‘Instruction in righteousness.’

II. *Those who grieve Him.*—(*Eph.* iv. 30).—This is done by offering to Him perpetual slights, by perpetually falling into little sins. Little sins are to God the Holy Ghost what dust is to our nostrils and throat; it chokes us, they irritate Him. He cannot rest in a house in which the sinful dust of the soul is always being raised up. These slights flow from want of—1) caution; 2) earnestness and feeling; 3) self-discipline.

III. *Those who quench Him.*—(1 *Thess.* v. 19).—Such by steady sin drive Him out of their hearts, and put an unclean spirit in His place. As a gentle fire, He is extinguished by the wind of pride, or by the multitude of waters, of pleasures, and sensual sins.

Epilogue.—If we would receive so gracious a guest, the house of the Lord must be—1) emptied of the spirit of the world; 2) cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and of the spirit; 3) perfected in holiness by the fear of God. When the Holy Ghost sits upon the soul, He—1) quenches the thirst of this world; 2) He checks all murmurings, as a full vessel does not ring; 3) He gives rise to all holy speech. (*Matt.* xii. 34.)

SERMON 363.

THE RIVULETS OF GRACE.—(*Epistle. Ser. II.*)

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—*Acts ii. 14.*

Introduction.—The Holy Ghost sends forth seven rivulets or streams of divine grace.

I. *Of tears.*—This He administers when He causes, by contrition, the sinner to weep over sins, in which formerly he indulged with delight. This first work of salvation is a happy stream, which is a second baptism cleansing from sin, if it proceeds from true contrition. Oh, happy Magdalene, who, by a peculiar privilege, enriched by this stream, gained a pardon.

II. *Of vinegar.*—When the soul, agitated by the stings of grief, submits itself to the yoke of a bitter repentance, which before it was unwilling to endure. Types; waters of Marah. (*Ex. xv. 23-25.*) Ruth's vinegar of refreshment after toil. (*Ruth ii. 14.*) The 'two milch kine,' lust and pleasure, which, yoked, bring the ark of the soul into the temple of God. (*Sam. vi. 12.*)

III. *Of wine.*—The works of repentance in which men delight after contrition. New wine in new bottle of soul. (*Matt. ix. 17.*) The Elim (*Ex. xv. 27*), after Marah.

IV. *Of oil.*—Works of mercy and compassion, like that of the Good Samaritan. Jesus Christ ever poured out this oil of compassion. So to Job. (*Job xxix. 6.*) A fulness of grace. (*Ezek. xxxii. 14.*)

V. *Of milk.*—The state of contented innocency when the old pleasures are put away. (*1 Peter ii. 2*; *Can. v. 3.*) A firm hope of heavenly land flowing with milk and honey.

VI. *Of honey.*—The taste of heavenly sweetness, which leads to the rejection of all lower delights. It relates to the land of promise. It signifies contemplation upon the divine power, wisdom, beauty, and sweetness.

VII. *Of nectar.*—Contemplation absorbed into glory when the soul is lifted heavenwards. Its taste enlightens the eyes. (*1 Sam. xiv. 26.*) 'Spiced wine.' (*Canct. viii. 2.*) It is composed of the most precious spices, which no one can realize without tasting, which inebriate the loving soul.

Epilogue.—Drink of all these rivulets of divine grace, remember that tears of contrition end in the nectar of heavenly joy.

SERMON 364.

THE RECEPTION OF THE HOLY GHOST.

(Epistle. Ser. III.)

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts ii. 4.

Introduction.—The gift, partially given before, to-day was given in fulness, without stint, a gift, which in a mysterious way is united with the Body of Jesus Christ. There were the natural defects in the Body of the Lord before His resurrection. (1 Peter ii. 24.) This body is the Church. (Eph. i. 22, 23.) So moral defects in His mystical body, for (John vii. 39.) when His natural body was glorified then His mystical body, the Church, was gifted with the fulness of intellectual knowledge; of spiritual power; of universal eloquence; of 1) (Luke xxiv. 44, 45); of 2) (2 Cor. v. 20; John xx. 21, 22; Matt. xviii. 18); of 3) (Acts ii. 4.) Note the four states of heart which are needed to receive the Holy Ghost with the fulness of grace.

I. *Bodily abstinence.*—Not fasting alone, but a generally temperate and sober habit of body. As green wood will not kindle, so the pampered body is not kindled of the Holy Ghost. (Ezek. xxxvii. 5.) Here 'very dry' bones signify a temperate body. The breath, God the Holy Ghost, is their quickening spirit.

II. *Effectual prayer.*—Some prayers are only mere recitations; words used as ornaments are put on. Real prayer on bended knee with hands and eye and heart elevated to heaven, begins by a vision of the Lord in glory. As fresh air cools the mouth in respiration, so does the devout soul breathe out the hot air of sin and sorrow, and inhale the cool air of the Holy Ghost. Prayer is the great preparation of the Holy Ghost. (Acts i. 14.)

III. *Brotherly concord.*—Breath acts only when all the members are united in the body. So brotherly concord is needful for grace of the Holy Ghost. (Acts ii. 1; Heb. xii. 14, 15.)

IV. *Doctrinal hearing.*—Hearing the word of God; 1) humbly; 2) believingly; 3) practically.

Epilogue.—Oh, hinder not this gift, which Jesus Christ has procured for the soul.

SERMON 365.

THE BLESSED PRESENCE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“If a man love me he will keep my words: and my Father will love Him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”—*S. John* xiv. 23.

Introduction.—The servants of God especially desire three things in this life—1) To possess the love of God. 2) To be confirmed in this love until the end. 3) To know and feel assured that they have it. The Holy Ghost is this loving Spirit, by whom is communicated the love of God. We note—

I. *The Presence itself.*—‘We will come unto him.’ The Blessed Trinity came by helping, let us come by obeying; they come by enlightening, let us come by beholding; they come by loving, let us come by imitating. (Aug.) This presence, for its reception, requires—1) Purification of the soul; precious things are not put in impure vessels (Ps. li. 10); firstly the cleansing, and then the reception of the spirit. Houses are prepared for the reception of a distinguished guest. 2) Deep humility. We like to visit where we are honoured, and God the Holy Ghost is honoured by humility. He is like water which does not flow over the mountain of proud hearts. (Ps. civ. 10.) 3) Tranquillity. (Isa. lxvi. 2.) Manna was not given amid the noise of Egypt.

II. *The preservation of the Presence.*—“Make our abode with him.” God, the Holy Ghost, is like a fire, and is kept in the soul, as fire is kept alight: 1) By coal, meditation upon death, etc.; 2) by wood, our good works; 3) by air or breath. a) Man blows this fire by his holy desires; b) Jesus Christ by His gifts (John xx. 22); c) the devil trusts to put it out by the wind of lust. (Isa. liv. 16.)

III. *The manifestation of the Presence.*—By obedience “he will keep my words,” and besides this He manifests Himself—1) as a dove (Matt. iii. 16), shewn by our forgiveness of injuries; 2) as a cloud, (Matt. xvii. 5), shewn by our tears of repentance; 3) as a fire (Acts ii. 3), shewn by a burning desire for heavenly things.

Epilogue.—Seek ever to retain both this Presence and the knowledge of it.

SERMON 366.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE GIFT.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. II.)

“He shall give you another Comforter.”—*John* xiv. 16.

Introduction.—Men esteem, at the greatest value, the grace and favour of princes: to obtain it, they endure labours, expenses, envyings, æmulations, etc., suffering all kinds of indignities and reproaches. Jacob asked only this of Esau. (*Gen.* xxxiii. 8.) If the grace of man is of so much moment, of how much more value is the grace or favour of God? which is (*Rom.* vi. 23), and is given as to-day in the gift of God the Holy Ghost to the church. At the first gift of Whom we note—

I. *An elevation of soul*.—The meeting place was an ‘upper room.’ (*Acts* i. 13.) So ought the gift to be received by those who dwell in the higher and upper portions of the soul in high and heavenly thoughts. When the mind is full of the lower things of this life, riches, honours, pleasures, etc., it cannot receive the heavenly gift. God giveth health to all, but His Spirit to those only who tread under foot earthly desires. (*Isa.* xlii. 5.) For (*Jam.* iv. 8) by lifting up the soul to Him: ‘I will arise.’ (*Luke* xv. 18.)

II. *Works of mercy*.—In this same ‘upper chamber’ the Lord’s Supper was eaten and the feet of the disciples washed. So ought we to feed the hungry and to help the distressed. Almsgiving gained the gift for Cornelius. (*Acts* x. 4.) These things are done to Jesus Christ Himself. (*Matt.* xxv. 40.)

III. *Unity of soul*.—With one accord (*Acts* ii. 44; iv. 32) spiritual unction descends upon united hearts. (*Ps.* cxxxiii. 2.) ‘The head,’ Jesus Christ; ‘Aaron’s beard,’ the Apostles; ‘Zion,’ the whole church; ‘ointment,’ the anointing of God the Holy Ghost. Mutual love and forgiveness. (*Matt.* vi. 14.)

IV. *Tranquillity of soul*.—‘They were sitting.’ God collects all our distractions of soul and fixes them in one desire, viz., Himself. Mary gained grace and pardon sitting at Jesus’ feet. With noise and strife no communion of the Spirit.

V. *Patient waiting of soul*.—Fifty days of—1) repentance; 2) patience; 3) faith; 4) hope. Stony breast is smitten by the flint of contrition; and the fire of God the Holy Ghost is kindled in the soul. (*S. Luke* xviii. 13.)

Epilogue.—Seek all the means for drawing the Holy Ghost to the soul.

SERMON 367.

INDWELLING GRACE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“We will come unto Him, and make our abode with Him.”—*John* xiv. 23.

Introduction.—Three great rewards were offered for the death of Goliath—1) Great riches: 2) the king’s daughter; 3) exemption from taxation. (1 Sam. xvii. 2-5.) Greater far are the rewards offered by God in this day’s Gospel if we will but slay sin, since He promises us heaven, becoming—

I. *Our Father.*—Indwelling grace confers on man the dignity of the adopted sonship of God. ‘My Father will love him,’ not with a general but with a paternal love (1 John iii. 1; Matt. vi. 9), by our Blessed Lord’s command. A ray from the sun of righteousness deifies the soul; as the reflection of the sun in a mirror represents the sun, so does grace in the soul represent God. We by it become His real sons, of one nature with Him. (2 Peter i. 4.) Note 1) the dignity of his filiation. Job felt it. (Job vii. 17.) Hear the Lord speaking. (Matt. ix. 2.) 2) The blessedness of it; grace is the seed of glory. (Rom. viii. 17.) All things are ours (Luke xv. 31), even eternal life. (Rom. vi. 23.)

II. *Our Guest.*—‘We will come unto him’ with a particular favour, love, and glory; not by an ambassador, but in our own proper person, really and personally; grace mediating, establishing a bond of union between God and man. The centurion and S. John Baptist both felt this dignity. Matt. viii. 8; iii. 14.) On the profit of this visitant, we have—1) plenty (1 Cor. xv. 10; Gen. xxx. 43; John vii. 38; 2) protection (Rom. viii. 31); 3) all spiritual blessings.

III. *Our Bridegroom.*—‘Make our abode with Him.’ (Hos. ii. 19, 20.) David thought it a high honour to be united to Michal. (1 Sam. xviii. 18.) The gain of this is—1) That God is bound to that soul for ever. (Ezek. xvi. 8.) 2) That the soul will be adorned (Deut. xxi. 11-14); 3) refreshed (Matt. ix. 15); 4) dowered with all the Bridegroom’s dowry. (Rom. xiv. 17.)

Epilogue.—Who cannot fail to be excited when they hear what blessings, riches, dignities, and prerogatives God hath prepared for them that love Him?

SERMON 368.

THE SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY GHOST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Another Comforter.”—*John* xiv. 16.

Introduction.—‘Another Comforter’ in the stead of myself: yet one who is not ‘another,’ having ever been engaged in fulfilling the offices of love and mercy to man; and yet ‘another,’ inasmuch as He took a new symbol to-day; to-day performed a new office; to-day came upon men with a larger and a fuller power. We note the three symbols of God the Holy Ghost, by which He was manifested specially to-day.

I. *The Symbol of Wind.*—‘A rushing mighty wind.’ So of old (1 Kings xix. 12) an appropriate symbol, for wind—1) clears the air from clouds and rain. (Prov. xxv. 23.) So does grace drive the clouds of sin and doubt out of the soul; restoring brightness where all was dull and dim. 2) Cools the air, as it was cooled by the Spirit to the three Holy Children. (Daniel iii. 25.) What the ‘fourth’ presence or angel did for these, that does the Holy Ghost do for us: He cools the heat of this world’s lust and temptation. 3) Dries up superfluous moisture. (Exod. xiv. 21.) So the Spirit dries up undue confidence and pride of soul; undue and overmuch tears and sorrow.

II. *The Symbol of Fire.*—1) Fire communicates itself to other matter, spreading itself over what is cold; the fire of the Holy Ghost inflames the cold heart of man (Luke xii. 49). The earth is the fleshly heart; cold, with the pleasures of the world; to be kindled by the love of God. 2) It enlightens dark places, like the pillar of fire. (Exod. xiii. 21.) So the Holy Spirit leads us from a state of sin, through the night of this world, to the land of light and holiness. (Ps. cxliii. 10.) 3) It quickens by its heat, for heat is friendly to life; and by His heat the Holy Ghost quickens dead souls. (1 Peter, iii. 18.)

III. *The Symbol of Tongues.*—1) The tongue speaks (Acts ii. 4); so the Spirit makes the heart to utter pious musings. 2) It teaches as the Spirit teaches the soul. (John xiv. 26.) 3) It preaches and exhorts. (Mark xvi. 20.)

Epilogue.—These symbols imply a victory, a restoration, and an endurance.

SERMON 369.

THE PEACE OF THE HOLY GHOST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. V.)

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.”—*John* xiv. 27.

Introduction.—‘Peace be with you,’ a common form of salutation in ancient times. So did the Angel salute Gideon in his fear (*Jud.* vi. 23, 24), who built an altar, ‘Jehovah Peace.’ We often wish one another peace, but we gain it not, because we ask it amiss, neither seeking for, or receiving, that true and solid peace which our Lord, having procured for us by His Incarnation and Passion, dispenses by the Holy Ghost, Who is the dispenser of this inestimable treasure. This true peace changes sorrow into joy, trial into victory, death into life. It is the Peace—1) of God (*Phil.* iv. 7); 2) of the Holy Ghost (*Gal.* v. 22). This Peace is an—

I. *Holy Peace.*—It tends to good, not to evil. Evil peace was found—1) amongst the builders of the Tower of Babel (*Gen.* xi. 3); 2) Joseph’s brethren (*Gen.* xxxvii. 18); 3) Scribes and Pharisees, to catch Jesus Christ in His words (*Matt.* xix. 3); 4) Pharisees and Herodians (*Matt.* xxii. 16, 23); 5) Pilate and Herod (*Luke* xxiii. 12). The motion of the Holy Spirit produces holy results.

II. *Internal Peace.*—Peace of heart, pacifying and making the countenance serene. Seen in the Apostles (*Acts* v. 41), after their imprisonment and stripes. It—1) excludes passion; 2) subdues temptations; 3) drives out fear; 4) conquers suffering.

III. *Stable Peace.*—Shaken by no—1) injury; 2) sorrow; 3) or doubt. ‘Let not your heart be troubled;’ ‘I will see you again.’ (*John* xvi. 22.)

IV. *Universal Peace.*—Alike between friends and enemies, admitting of no limit or restriction. (*Rom.* xii. 18; *Ps.* cxx. 7.)

V. *A gratuitous Peace.*—Freely given, not bought or sold.

Epilogue.—Seek this peace and ensue it. Wretchedness of discord.

SERMON 370.

THE COMING OF THE PARACLETE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“The Comforter Whom the Father will send in my name.”—*John* xiv. 26.

Introduction.—The coming of this Comforter, whose advent is promised by the Gospel, is recorded in the Epistle likewise. As great events are perpetuated by the arts of the sculptor or the painter, so does S. Luke paint this great event for the instruction of the Church for all time; and looking at his picture we note that the Holy Ghost came—

I. *Upon the day of Pentecost.*—The day of Pentecost is to signify—1) That the old law was on this day changed into the new. The law was given on Sinai fifty days after the Passover, and fifty days after the Christian Passover, the new law is given to Christians, in a house instead of from a mountain. (*Heb.* xii. 18-25.) The law of fear was changed into a law of love, the tables of stone into tables of the heart. 2) A Jubilee of full remission of sins for the whole world. Fiftieth year of jubilee. (*Levit.* xxv. 10.) 3) The harvest of Jesus Christ begins to-day, when the Jews began their earthly reaping. (*John* iv. 35.) 4) A festival of first-fruits. (*Levit.* xxiii. 17.) The Jews and Gentiles represent respectively the two wave loaves.

II. *Upon those sitting in the house.*—1) No fire unless in the Church of God; no rest for the dove save in Ark. (*Gen.* viii. 9.) Failure of Baal's prophets (*1 Kings* xviii. 27). 2) No fire unless brotherly love and concord be present. (*Ps.* cxxxiii. 2.)

III. *Suddenly with an impetus.*—‘Rushing mighty wind.’—1) To manifest the miracle of the mission. 2) To imply the fervour with which the Spirit acts. 3) To teach the soul ever to be prepared for His blessed Advent. (*John* iii. 8.)

IV. *From heaven with a sound.*—1) The sound of His miraculous gifts did go unto all the earth. (*Ps.* xix. 4). 2) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is from heaven.

V. *It filled the whole house.*—1) The copious repletion of the Holy Ghost; still small voice to Elijah (*1 Kings* xix. 13); to Eliphaz in a whisper. (*Job* iv. 16.) 2) He fills every angle and corner of the house and the world. (*Joel* ii. 28.)

Epilogue.—He will and can make a Pentecost in the soul.

SERMON 371.

THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VII.)

“He shall teach you all things.”—*John* xiv. 26.

Introduction.—God the Holy Ghost teaches by His inspirations, which are the results of the energy of His working upon the soul; and He does this by a fourfold operation upon it—

I. *He elevates it by contemplation.*—Contemplation leads upwards to the knowledge of things heavenly, and to a corresponding depreciation of things earthly. The Spirit does as (*Ezek.* viii. 3), and being between ‘earth and heaven’ we can see the heavenly things that are perfect and the earthly things that are imperfect; the King of heaven, and the kings of earth; the true soldiers, treasures, knowledges, so as to weigh one against the other.

II. *He purifies it from sin.*—(*John* xvi. 8).—By reproof and punishment. The seven angels (*Rev.* viii. 2) represent the judgments of the Holy Ghost upon the earth. 1) ‘Trees’ are nobles. 2) ‘Sea’ is merchandise. 3) ‘Men’ the artizans. 4) ‘Earth’ the rustics. 5) Sun, Moon, etc., Priests. 6) Locusts the proud. 7) Woman clothed with the sun; the state of righteousness. In each class are some worthy; others who have just escaped destruction. The rest are punished. Holy Ghost purifies from sin—1) by exciting remorse; 2) by infusing hope; 3) by urging to activity; 4) by giving strength.

III. *He rectifies it by direction.*—Intention carries the standard in the kingdom of virtues and conscience, and therefore it needs an accurate setting right, for the intentions of—1) hypocrites; 2) liars; 3) flatterers; 4) and libertines need especial correction. He moulds the intention to His own Blessed Will; altering our vain purposes, and setting before the soul the true end, aim, and purpose of life.

IV. *He instructs it by information.*—As He informs or remoulds the soul so does He instruct it in—1) what it ought to love; 2) what it ought to avoid; 3) true self-discipline.

Epilogue.—(1 *Thess.* v. 19).—Place no obstacle to His most holy work.

SERMON 372.

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“If ye love Me keep My commandments.”—*John* xiv. 15.

Introduction.—The love of God to man is wonderfully manifested by the Holy Ghost, Who came down to-day to bring upon man a larger share of the Love of God than ever he had had before. This loving Paraclete draws man up to God, and God's graces down to man. This Spirit of Love; this Pentecostal Gift resting upon the soul makes it—

I. *Actively obedient.*—Upon comparatively few does this Holy Ghost descend to their profit: the proud love honours; the luxurious, pleasures; the covetous, riches. (*Prov.* i. 22; *Ps.* iv. 3.) We are apt to say that we love God, forgetful that true love is known by its fruits, and that it implies a—1) loving service; 2) a holy obedience; 3) a sacrifice for the loved one.

II. *Acceptable.*—‘My Father will love him.’ (*John* xvi. 15.) Weigh the dignity involved in being a friend of Jesus Christ, and note the confusion which awaits His enemies. 1) The Loving Spirit unites the loving soul with God, Who is love. 2) Conforms the soul to the likeness of God. 3) Consecrates and sheds a glory and a dignity around every action and thought which flows from the influence of, this Spirit of Love.

III. *Fruitful.*—‘We will come and make our abode with Him.’ God the Holy Ghost has three relationships with man. 1) Some, He never visits, the hardened. (*Acts* vii. 51.) 2) Others, He comes to for a very short time, visiting them by compunction, which is soon conquered, and He passes away. 3) Others, He comes to and tarries with; the love of His presence enables them to endure; such were SS. Peter, Paul, and Mary Magdalene.

Epilogue.—Take heed, lest by resisting this Loving Spirit you are justly deprived of His Presence which is removed from those who refuse grace and also injure God's church; and from all wilful sinners. (*Isa.* lix. 2.)

SERMON 373.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“The Spirit of Truth.”—*John* xiv. 17.

Introduction.—Well did ‘the Spirit of Truth’ descend as on this day in the likeness of ‘tongues,’ thus setting forth what no slight portion of His work and operation was to be, in this world of falsehood, evil speaking, and thoughtless use of God’s wonderful gift of speech. This miraculous gift of tongues expressed—

I. *The faculty of interpreting language.*—That the Apostles might preach to many nations in their own languages; that burning words, and a burning law, should be spoken in a burning language, they had the power of interpreting languages. How burning was S. Peter’s speech to have converted three thousand souls in one day! God blesses our labours when for Lord we seek either to interpret the holy words of others or to proclaim a holy message in a foreign tongue. ‘The Spirit of Truth’ rightly interprets it to other hearts.

II. *The difficulty of governing the tongue.*—*Jam.* iii. 7, 8; *Rev.* xviii. 21.)—The difficulty and importance of governing the tongue was expressed by the ‘Spirit of Truth’ assuming its form; teaching us that a higher power than our own is needed if we would not offend in speech. The Spirit who directs our thoughts also watches over our minds, which are the signs and the symbols of our thoughts.

III. *The gain of governing the tongue.*—Infinite gain if the tongue be well governed. 1) The conversion of sinners. (*Jam.* v. 20.) 2) The confession of sin. (*Jam.* v. 16; 1 *John* i. 9.) 3) The praising God. (*Jam.* iii. 9.)

IV. *The perversity of not governing the tongue.*—Evil speaking—1) destroys all other graces; it is as a little poison which harms the cup of wine; 2) it renders a man hateful to others; 3) it corrupts his moral nature; all falsehood, detraction, slander, and unkind speaking, lower the affections, harden the heart, and close up the avenues of grace and goodness.

Epilogue.—If a great reward were offered for taming and breaking in a restive horse many would seek to earn it. The tongue is this horse. God promises His reward to those who duly use it.

SERMON 374.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“If ye love Me . . . even so I do.”—*John* xiv. 15-31.

Introduction.—That great Preacher, God the Holy Ghost, came from heaven to-day, and by the mouth of the Apostles preached His first sermon to many different races of men. When we hear the bell calling us to Church, let us regard it as an heavenly voice calling us to prepare our souls to receive the Spirit of God in our hearts; and let us listen to His teaching in the Gospel for to-day, in which He shows us—

I. *The dignity of loving God.*—It is a sublime thing to love God not only on account of His reciprocal love and infused grace, but because He really communicates Himself to those who love Him, sitting in them as in a temple. (Ser. 367.) By this communication of Godhead, there follows the highest union of the soul with God; a Godmaking elevation of heart by which man becomes God’s son and heir.

II. *That God’s commands can be obeyed.*—We can keep God’s commandments, ‘and keepeth them’ (vv. 15, 21, 23); they are not grievous. (1 John v. 3). True love leads to obedience.

III. *Grace and glory is promised to love and obedience.*—Not to faith alone. (v. 21.) As no one rider can make progress upon a wooden horse, so a dead or a wooden faith will not carry a soul to heaven. (James ii. 24.)

IV. *The blessing of peace.*—1) It preserves all blessings in their full power. 2) It is the tranquility and sweetest harmony of all things. 3) The beginning of the heavenly life, and has therefore a certain earthly blessedness, moving man heavenwards.

V. *To expel useless fear and dread.*—‘Let not your heart be troubled.’ (1 John iv. 18.) So (Prov. xii. 13) fear contains—1) servile imperfection; 2) torment; 3) a darkening of the reason. Deliberate fear, which is sin, we can guard against; but not against sudden fear.

VI. *The death of the holy is a cause for joy.*—‘Ye would rejoice, because I do.’ (Philipp. i. 21.) The fatal days of the saints were called their natal days.

VII. *Satan tempts in the hour of weakness.*—Prince of this world cometh at this My time of Passion.

SERMON 375.

THE DOOR OF THE KINGDOM.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“A door was opened in heaven.”—*Rev.* iv. 1.

Introduction.—When the door was opened the thrice holy song was heard: ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty:’ A song of the Blessed Trinity, which was Angelical, Evangelical, Prophetical, and Apostolic; a song which attributes perpetual adoration to the Trinity by Angels, just men, and created intelligences; a song which implies power to the Father, wisdom to the Son, clemency to the Holy Ghost. This door of heaven is no unapt type of the Ever Blessed Three, for a door signifies—

I. *Egress.*—The citizens go out of the city by the gate or door; so from the house of eternity, with its Eastern three gates (*Rev.* xxi. 13), all extrinsic production proceeds. (*Ezek.* xlviii. 32.) So says the Apostle. (*Rom.* xi. 36.) As all good gifts come from the natural heaven, so do spiritual gifts from the spiritual heaven. (*Ps.* xix. 6; *James* i. 17.) From the Trinity, through the door of heaven, flow—1) Wisdom. (*Job* xxviii. 20, 23; *Rom.* xi. 32.) A fountain of wisdom flows from the Son. 2) Life, from the Father as the fount of all divinity. (*Ps.* xxxvi. 9.) So David said. (*Ps.* xlii. 1, 2.) Hence the complaint of Jeremiah (*Jer.* ii. 13); for in God. (*Acts* xvii. 28.) 3) Goodness, from the Holy Ghost, who called the fountain of goodness.

II. *Ingress.*—By the gate the citizens enter into the city. Hence (*John* x. 9). We enter into glory by the work of the Trinity; they afford us the means of ingress to the city of eternity. (*Ps.* cxviii. 19.)

III. *Protection.*—Enemies, Jews, heretics, etc., knock against this gate without success. Like the men of Sodom, they cannot ‘find the door.’ Hence (*Gen.* xix. 11) the reproof. (*John* v. 39.)

Epilogue.—Use we this holy door by faith and obedience, and so gain the vision of God.

SERMON 376.

A REVELATION OF THE TRINITY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)“A door was opened in heaven.”—*Rev.* iv. 1.

Introduction.—This ‘door’ was before this time opened to S. Paul, who spake of (1 Cor. xiii. 14) from what he had learned in heaven. (2 Cor. xii. 4.) He with S. John, looking through a door in heaven, saw a Trinity Benediction. In this benediction the three persons of the Blessed Trinity are brought before us in their several works for the children of the regeneration. The person of the Son is here put before that of the Father, so that the Arian doctrine of the inferiority of the Son to the Father is thus overthrown.

I. *The work of God the Son—Grace.*—The grace or favour of our Blessed Lord is shown to us in many ways. 1) In His humiliation. (2 Cor. viii. 9.) We are mindful of this His grace, when we liberally relieve the poverty of our neighbours. It is an abuse for a rich man to become a miserable worm by avarice, when for his sake the Lord of Hosts became poor. 2) In His dying for us. (Tit. ii. 11-14.) He redeemed us when sold; He quickened us, dead; He honoured us, degraded. (Gal. ii. 20, 21.) 3) In his making us co-heirs with Himself. (Tit. iii. 4, 7.) The Only-begotten Son died that other sons might be born to God, and so He might not be left alone.

II. *The work of God the Father—Love.*—This love of God is shewn—1) By His drawing us to Himself, and joining our sister, which is human nature, to His Son. (Jer. xxxi. 3.) 2) By His delivering His Son a ransom for us. (1 John iv. 9.) 3) By His adopting us to be His sons. (1 John iii. 1, 2.) 4) By His guardian care of us by His holy Angels. (Ps. xc. 11, 12.) Correcting us when wrong. (Rev. iii. 19.) Of the erring soul. (Hosh. ii. 6, 7.)

III. *The work of God the Holy Ghost—Communion.*—He communicates Himself now by grace, hereafter by glory; our Paraclete or Comforter now, our Reward in our heavenly country. Communion of the Holy Ghost is—1) Of sympathy, rejoicing with the glad, etc. (2 Cor. xi. 29; 1 Cor. xii. 26.) 2) Of mutual justice. (Matt. vii. 12.) 3) Of friendship, (Ps. cxix. 63; 1 John i. 3; Mal. iii. 16.)

Epilogue.—This high and mysterious doctrine is to be proved by experience, not reasoned upon by the intellect.

SERMON 377.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE TRINITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“We speak that we do know.”—*John* iii. 11.

Introduction.—And only that; of the full mystery of this day's festival we speak not, for of it we know only in part, it being revealed to us for the most part in types, prophecies, and hints. We read of it (*Gen.* i. 1-5), ‘God is the Father;’ the ‘Beginning’ is the Son; the Spirit of God ‘is the Holy Ghost;’ ‘Light’ is the faith in the Trinity, by which a division is made between the believing and unbelieving (*Gen.* i. 1-5), the infidels being the walkers. (*Proy.* iv. 19.) Why then do we keep the Feast of Trinity :—

I. *For the confirmation of our faith.*—That year after year by this celebration, we may be more and more confirmed in our belief in the one and simple essence of divinity, and in the Trinity of persons in it. Hence we recite the *glorias* at the end of each Psalm. The ministry of Jesus Christ assumes Him to be Son of God in the flesh, and that He was conceived of God the Holy Ghost. The revelation of grace demands an explicit assent to this doctrine as that upon which the incarnation hangs.

II. *For the due recognition of the divine benefits.*—1) God formed our souls as a representation of the Trinity, with reason, memory, and will. 2) The Trinity all work for us and with us, creating, redeeming, and sanctifying.

III. *For a foretaste of eternal glory.*—This festival brings with it a certain prelibation of eternal blessedness, for it leads us especially to contemplate the glory of the eternal Majesty; not alone in its workings for our salvation, but also in Itself; in its unity of essence, in which consists the vision of eternal blessedness. (*John* xvii. 3.)

Epilogue.—This mystery is to be faithfully accepted; and this festival to be celebrated as the church commands in reverence of the divine Majesty. Let us learn on earth those praises which we hope to celebrate one day in heaven.

SERMON 378.

THE HUMAN SIMILITUDE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)“That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.”—*John* iii. 8.

Introduction.—‘God is a Spirit,’ and man is ‘born of the Spirit’ (*Gen.* ii. 7), and the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, for the three Persons of the Trinity are one in essence. The human soul is a similitude of—

I. *God the Father in memory.*—God is the fountain of all things, and memory has fecundity, being the parent of all things in the soul, for it reproduces all the past as if it were present. Memory is to be assiduously cultivated; 1) by a remembrance of God’s benefits; 2) by the continued meditation upon God, Whom it presents to the soul as ever present, so that the faithful soul can say (*Ps.* xvi. 8), Forgetfulness of God and his benefits corrupts the memory, as Moses said (*Deut.* xxxii. 8), then comes the judgment. (*Ps.* ix. 17.)

II. *God the Son in understanding.*—The wisdom of God flows through the Son, and there ought to be a true knowledge of God by faith, and the eyes of the understanding ought ever to be turned to the Son of Righteousness by contemplation, so as to say (*Ps.* xxv. 15). This understanding is vitiated, and the sun is darkened by—1) error; 2) curiosity; 3) by the desire of novelties; hence the defections from the faith. (*Ps.* lxxxii. 5.)

III. *God the Holy Ghost in will.*—The will or the affection represents the Holy Ghost, who is the chief goodness and immense love, and who excites us to the love of God and our neighbour. The will must be exercised in goodness. (1 *John* iv. 16.) This will is weakened—1) by all hatred and unlovingness; 2) destroyed by sin, which separates God entirely from the soul. (*Ps.* lxxiii. 27.)

Epilogue.—Memory, understanding, and will, are three operations and distinct faculties of one soul, as there are three Persons of one substance. These faculties give an image of God.

SERMON 379.

THE THREEFOLD DRAWING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Ye must be born again.”—*John* iii. 7.

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord, further unfolding the result of the new birth, said, ‘No man can come unto Me except the Father, Who hath sent Me, draw him.’ (*John* vi. 44.) This is the object of the new birth, which brings the soul within the sphere of the action of the Blessed Trinity, for no one can ascend to what is supernatural unless he be drawn by some higher power than his own. Stone is raised by motive power; the soul weighed down by the body requires a given motive power to raise it too. The natural will is depressed by sin. (*Eph.* ii. 3; *Gen.* viii. 21; *Rom.* vii. 15.) The dumb child was only healed on confession of the father’s faith. (*Mark* ix. 24.) This faith a result of ‘drawing.’ The child of the regeneration is thus raised: since—

I. *God the Father draws by His power.*—A threefold cord—1) By the fidelity of His promises to the believing. (*Ps.* lxxxix. 34; *Rom.* viii. 32.) 2) By the seriousness of His correction for warnings. Terrors of law given on Mount Sinai. (*Exod.* xix. 18.) 3) By the severity of His condemnation to horrify. Korah, etc. (*Num.* xvi. 32.) Will ask (*Jer.* x. 7); for whither can the sinner flee. (*Ps.* cxxxix. 8.) The wicked, like Balaam, pray (*Num.* xxiii. 10).

II. *God the Son draws by His wisdom.*—A threefold cord—1) By His redemption (*John* vi. 44); by love and fear. 2) By the purity of His teaching; hence S. Peter’s reply (*John* vi. 67); by the example of His holy life. (*John* xiii. 15.) Example moves more than words. This drawing is not violent of necessity, nor against the will, but of love.

III. *God the Holy Ghost draws by His goodness.*—A threefold cord—1) By asking pardon for those (*Rom.* viii. 26) which may be hoped for. 2) By exhibiting His grace to those who are setting out on their Christian course. (*Rev.* iii. 20.) 3) By rewarding those who persevere with glory. (*Matt.* xxiv. 13.)

Epilogue.—The threefold cord of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with which man is bound to God, is essentially a cord of love; for love is the great means of unity between God and man, since it joins the lover and the loved one. Power, wisdom, and goodness are all exercised in love.

SERMON 380.

THE WORSHIP OF THE TRINITY.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IV.)

“The Kingdom of God.”—*John* iii. 5.

Introduction.—In one sense, the whole Kingdom of God is contained in that Trinity of Persons in the Unity of Nature, whose festival we are this day celebrating. This Kingdom of God, as representing the ever Blessed Trinity, is to be worshipped by us; for—

I. *We were created after Its image.*—(*Gen.* i. 1.)—The ‘God’ is plural, *Elohim* ‘Gods;’ and afterwards ‘the beginning’ is the Son, and the ‘Spirit of God’ is the Holy Ghost. Of man ‘Us’ (*Gen.* i. 26). God sculptured His image on man at the Creation: the Father as memory, the receptacle of infinite thoughts; the Son as the understanding, in which wisdom dwells; the Holy Ghost as the will, in which love and the affections reside. We are recreated or baptized into this same Trinity (*Matt.* xxviii. 19; iii. 16); our Lord’s baptism a manifestation of the Trinity.

II. *We are preserved by Its power.*—The power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, and the goodness of the Holy Ghost, sustains the worlds both of nature and of grace. (*Isa.* xl. 12.)

IV. *We are inhabited by Its presence.*—(*John* xiv. 23.)—Not as a traveller in an inn, but as a guest in the house of a friend. So on the visit paid to Abraham (*Gen.* xviii. 2) Abraham—1) pressed his hospitality; 2) prepared a meal; 3) washed his guests’ feet; 4) waited upon them with all respect. So should we treat the spiritual presence of the Holy Trinity in the soul. (*1 Cor.* vi. 20.) Acting like Zacchæus, to obtain the Lord for a guest. (*Luke* xix. 4.)

V. *As citizens of heaven we should offer perpetual praise.*—As one day we hope to join in the ‘*Ter sanctus*’ around the throne of the Lamb, contemplating in the Trinity the works of God, so now we must learn the first notes of angelic worship and praise.

Epilogue.—Let us seek that the worship which we render to the Trinity be—1) Sincere; 2) fervent; 3) powerful in all things which may claim their love and favour.

SERMON 381.

THE TRINITY IN MAN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”—*John* iii. 6.

Introduction.—Because man was so born in the beginning (*Gen.* ii. 7) he bears God’s image in his soul, as being a copy from the Divine Exemplar; the likeness which is not lasting he lost by the Fall; the imperfect image he still carries about with him. In an image there is ordination of parts, figure, and colour; in the soul, ordination of faculties, proportion of powers, assimilation of a spiritual transformation. This capacity separates man from the lower creatures. The memory, understanding, and will render man capable of knowing and of loving God, and giving him the high nobility of the reasonable soul, which is to be diligently preserved. This created internal Trinity, is one of the faculties in the unity of the soul, which afford a threefold ministry.

I. *Of noble condition.*—1) Of purity, which sin spots and defiles. 2) Of integrity, which sin breaks up, perverting the memory, understanding, will, or affections. (*Rom.* i. 21.) 3) Of enlightenment, which sin darkens.

II. *Of notable distinction.*—1) Of generous creation: natural aptitude of knowing and loving God. 2) Of gracious recreation: known by the conformity of grace. 3) Of glorious assimilation. (1 *John* iii. 2.) The first image is common to all men; the second to the elect; the third to the blessed.

III. *Of desirable perfection.*—This is when God is the object upon which the memory, understanding, and will all dwell; then man becomes like God, and the Trinity in God is realized in his soul. Wicked become like Satan.

Epilogue.—Defile not this image; abuse not these high powers. (*Deut.* iv. 9; *Matt.* xvi. 26.)

SERMON 382.

TYPES OF THE TRINITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“How shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?—*John* iii. 12.

Introduction.—How indeed? So ineffable is the mystery of the Trinity that S. Ambrose says: ‘It is impossible for me to understand the secret of the divine generation; the mind fails; the voice is silent; and not mine only, but that of the angels also. Put thy hand to thy mouth, it is not lawful for thee to scrutinize supernatural mysteries.’ Yet Holy Scripture shadows this mystery forth in the following type:—

I. *The three chambers in the Temple gate*.—(*Ezek.* xl. 10.) All belonging to one building.

II. *The promised Presence*.—(*Haggai* ii. 4, 5.) “I;” “the Word;” My Spirit.”

III. *The Creation*.—(*Gen.* i. 1, 2.) Jesus Christ is the ‘beginning.’ (*John* viii. 58; *Revv.* i. 8.) The Spirit of God; the Holy Ghost.

IV. *The creation of man*.—(*Gen.* i. 26.) ‘Us’ (*Gen.* ii. 7); breath, the Holy Spirit.

V. *The Rainbow*.—(*Gen.* ix. 12.) Its three primary colours.

VI. *The third plague*.—(*Exod.* viii. 19.) The magicians could not do this. “The finger of God.”

VII. *The three days’ journey*.—(*Exod.* iii. 18.) No perfect sacrifice without the Three Persons, represented by three days. (Aug.)

VIII. *Abraham’s journey*.—(*Gen.* xxii. 5.) ‘The three days conceal this mystery.’

IX. *Abraham’s guests*.—(*Gen.* xviii. 1.) At Mamre; (*ib.* 6.) though three, One Person addressed as ‘O Lord.’

X. *David’s Prayer*.—(*Ps.* vi. 8, 9.) The Lord of mercy, intercession, and inspiration.

XI. *David’s Benediction*.—(*Ps.* lxxvii. 6, 7.) ‘God,’ the Father; ‘our own God,’ the Son; the God of blessing, the Holy Ghost.

XII. *The three divisions of the Temple*.—Court, holy, and most holy places.

SERMON 383.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF DOCTRINE.—(*Holy Gospel.* Ser. VII.)

“Heavenly things.”—*John* iii. 12.

Introduction.—Amongst the greatest of these ‘heavenly things’ is that mystery we commemorate to-day: which is in part fulfilled before our very eyes, and yet remains a sign of our faith, because of its very mystery. The doctrine of the Trinity has had much use even on earth, its importance and its mystery have caused it to become—

I. *A Christian watchword.*—A mark or tally which reveals under what ruler we are enlisted, as distinguished from Jews, Socinians, etc. Calvin wished the words expressive of the doctrine buried, being half-ashamed of it. (*Inst.* i., c. xiii. sec. 5.) We confess it in our baptism of new birth, which is performed in the Name of the ‘Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’ (*Matt.* xxviii. 19.)

II. *A golden collar.*—1) A collar which God at the first put, so to speak, round the neck of this world, when the Father gave the Son to it, and both sent to it the Holy Ghost. 2) A badge of our individual adoption when we receive (2 *Cor.* xiii. 14.) 3) A sign given at Creation when the image of God in the three powers of memory, understanding, and will, impressed upon us the image of the Trinity.

III *A scope and rule for all our actions.*—In them all we need—1) the power of the Father; 2) the wisdom of the Son; 3) the goodness of the Holy Ghost. As a monad begot a monad, and turned its power into itself, so all our actions ought to be begun in the name of the Trinity, and reflected or ended in Its glory.

IV. *A bond of peace.*—The Trinity was in the Early Church a cord of love and a bond of peace. (*Acts* iv. 32.) ‘See how those Christians love each other,’ the heathen said.

V. *An echo of heavenly worship.*—(*Isa.* vi. 3; *Rev.* iv. 8.)

Epilogue.—1) Cling to this doctrine in earnest faith. 2) Live up to the realization of the work it implies. 3) Hopefully wait for a fuller revelation of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 384.

TRACES OF THE MYSTERY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“How can these things be?”—*John* iii. 9.

Introduction.—A question that can be asked as pertinently of the doctrine of the Trinity as of the New Birth; and asking it we exclaim (*Rom.* xi. 33); desiring to ascend the mountain or to descend into the valley, to investigate its heights and depths, and yet compelled at last to confess, that not in this life, but only in that state in which we shall see face to face, shall we be able to enter into its fulness. (*Ps.* xcii. 6.) Some traces of it we find.

I. *In the Old Testament*.—1) The “*Ter sanctus*” of Isaiah. (*Isa.* vi. 3.) Holy in power, wisdom, and goodness; the three attributes of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 2) Abraham had three guests, and yet he adored but one. (*Gen.* xviii. 1-3.) 3) God’s benediction. (*Ps.* lxvii. 6, 7.) Each person of the Trinity blesses us, and yet they are complete in ‘Him.’ 4) Solomon’s lilies (*1 Kings* vii. 19) with three anthers of the same height and colour, rising within the perfect flower. (*Cant.* v. 13.) The lily was Solomon’s emblem of the Trinity.

II. *In the New Testament*.—1) The baptismal commission. (*Matt.* xxviii. 19.) 2) The ‘Trisagion’ of S. John. (*Rev.* iv. 8.) 3) The threefold work of S. Paul. (*Rom.* xi. 36.) ‘Of Him,’ proceeding from Him; ‘by Him’ through the instrumentality of the Son; ‘to Him’ the Holy Ghost. 4) The three witnesses of S. John. (*1 John* v. 7.)

III. *In nature*.—1) In the sun roundness: perfection of eternity, the Father; light the Son; heat the Holy Ghost. 2) The flowing water: fountain, the Father; river, the Son; the lake, the Holy Ghost. (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 25.)

Epilogue.—The mystery we know not, the works we do know; and these we ought to—1) praise; 2) receive; 3) and to render ourselves worthy of; they are creation, redemption, and sanctification.

SERMON 385.

THE BLESSED THREE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.

“Thou art a teacher come from God.”—*John* iii. 2.

Introduction.—1) The Gospel for this Festival expressly recognises Three Persons in the Godhead ; the Son is speaking, the Father is mentioned ‘from God,’ and the Holy Ghost, ‘Water and the Spirit ;’ ‘that which is born of the Spirit.’ 2) These several attributes are also expressed. Power to the Father, ‘no one can do these miracles except God be with him.’ Wisdom, to the Son Who is “a teacher come from God.” Goodness, to the Holy Ghost as the source of man’s new birth, ‘born of the Spirit,’ Who infuses the grace of His goodness, but not from our deserts. With us a Father represents the impotence of age ; a Son the indiscretion of youth ; the Spirit unstable fury. We note—

I. *Power in God the Father.*—He is omnipotent in heaven, earth, sea, and hades. (*Ps.* cxxxv. 6.) Over demons too. (*Matt.* viii. 32.) Man as endowed with free will by God, is at present disobedient to His power. God’s power is hindered—1) By his compassionate pity (*Jer.* xxxi. 3), being more ready to grant than the sinner is to receive pardon. 2) By His affectionate love. (*Luke* xii. 50.) 3) By our tearful prayer. (*Hosea* xii. 4.) 4) By our grateful humility. (*1 Kings* xxi. 29.)

II. *Wisdom to God the Son.*—(*Coloss.* ii. 3.) Yet He suffered Himself to be deceived—1) In selling the kingdom of heaven for half its value ; to the Apostles for nets and small ships ; to Zacchæus for half his goods ; to the widow for two mites ; to another for a cup of cold water. 2) In buying our vile flesh at so dear a price. 3) In exchanging the gold of His grace for the clay of our sin ; a heap of joy for the seeds of tears.

III. *Goodness to God the Holy Ghost.*—Goodness—1) Surrounding the just ; 2) exhorting the wicked ; 3) drawing the hard ; 4) receiving the penitent.

Epilogue.—1) Rest in this power, wisdom, and goodness. 2) Remember that sin turns all these against the sinner.

SERMON 386.

THE LESSONS OF THE TRINITY.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.

“Thou art a teacher come from God.”—*John* iii. 2.

Introduction.—These words can be well applied to that great and mysterious doctrine which we commemorate to-day. The doctrine of three Persons in a unity of nature, as far as we can fathom its mystery and bearing, is indeed a God-sent teacher; teaching—

I. *Self-Inspection.*—The Father from all eternity, knowing Himself and beholding Himself as in a mirror, formed a conception within Himself and an image of His life which is the Son (*Heb.* i. 3; *Coloss.* i. 25) in Whom He rests content. And in our measure we should seek by introspection to produce that which being fashioned by divine grace will supply all our need. In bodily things we so learn humility; in spiritual things obtain a great gain. (2 *John* 9.)

II. *Mutual Love.*—As of one essence, one knowledge and love pervades the Blessed Trinity; mental love is a source of blessedness and joy. The fat which the sons of Eli took away from God, represents ‘love.’ (1 *Sam.* ii. 16.) So without the love of God, no one can please Him and be blessed.

III. *Mutual Concord.*—A distinct threefold personality, yet a oneness of action. The Father is origin, and yet has it not; the Holy Ghost has origin and is it not; the Son both has and is origin; yet they all agree.

IV. *Perfect communication of good.*—The Father communicates His entire substance of divinity to the Son, and the Father and the Son conjointly to the Holy Ghost. Personality is retained; attributes are communicated; so ought we in all things to act. (*Acts* ii. 44.)

V. *Mutual zeal for each other's honour.*—Father for the Son. (*Deut.* xviii. 19.) Son for the Father. (*John* ii. 16.) The Son for the Holy Ghost. (*Matt.* xii. 32.)

Epilogue.—Let us learn these lessons—1) Thoroughly; 2) practically; 3) unceasingly.

SERMON 387.

THE GROUNDS OF FEAR.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Perfect love casteth out fear.”—*John* iv. 18.

Introduction.—The fear of God and the love of God are needful to all who desire salvation. Fear is wisdom (*Prov.* i. 7) and holiness (*Prov.* xvi. 6). Love is the source of all goodness; when it ceases to act, it ceases also to be. That ‘perfect love’ which casteth out all fear, cannot be reached in this life, during which a certain fear clings to the soul, especially according to its degrees of sin. The just causes for our fear are—

I. *When Jesus Christ weeps over us.*—This expresses a most dangerous state; as over the doomed city (*Luke* xix. 41, 42; *John* xi. 35); as over the dead Lazarus; as over lost human nature. (*Heb.* v. 7.) The Son of God suffers and bewails; man suffers, and shall he laugh? We should weep over our—1) state; 2) weakness; 3) ingratitude.

II. *When we recall the Passion of the Lord.*—What a danger to need so awful an healing: how heavy are the wounds which demanded the wounding of the Lord. His Passion is the measure of our sin; in its—1) depth; 2) intensity; 3) universality.

III. *The consideration of our guilt and infirmity.*—We often reap the evil consequence of having done one single wrong to any one in power; what must we fear, when we think of our sins against God? A gnat-sting often makes us angry, and a small trouble to despair of life. (*1 Kings* xix. 4.) Our guilt demands eternal—1) death; 2) punishment.

IV. *A reflection upon God’s forbearance towards us.*—For according to the measure of His long-suffering here, will be His just judgment hereafter. He is perfect mercy and perfect justice. As we now slight His mercy, so shall we feel His anger. (*Ps.* vi. 1; *Prov.* vi. 34.) Fear to abuse His—1) Patience; 2) Love; 3) Opportunities.

V. *The Omnipotence of God.*—Which the sinner can neither resist nor escape. (*Ps.* cxxxix. 7, 8; *Matt.* x. 28; *Ps.* xc. 11.)

Epilogue.—Such reverential fear as this, is the true companion of that holy love which will one day be changed into the perfect love which will cast out all fear.

SERMON 388.

THE CONDITIONS OF LOVE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”—1 *John* iv. 8.

Introduction.—Such love is the foundation and complement of the whole law. Love and fear are the governing principles of life. We avoid all dangers because we love life and fear death; and we ought to be moved by love rather than by fear. (Rom. xiii. 10.) The conditions of such are, to love—

I. *Faithfully and sincerely, without deceit*.—(Rom. xii. 9.)—As truth requires the outward act or thing, the expressing word and the understanding mind, so the truth of love demands the outward work: the expression, and the good heart or will. Unless love flows from the soul it is but deceit. (Ps. xxvii. 3.) They who show us deeds of love, are of the class of Judas. We must love ‘in deed.’ Also ‘in word.’ We often refuse to speak the first word of reconciliation, forgetful that (Matt. xii. 35) ‘in word’ also as expressing the conception of the soul, in thought, word, and deed, we must love our neighbour.

II. *Prudently, with no corrupt motive*.—(Rom. xii. 9, 10.) Love is prudent, when the good is separated from the evil. How can this be done? (Matt. xviii. 8, 9.) ‘Cast from thee,’ it may harm thee. If the love of any one leads to an occasion of sin, that person must be ‘cast from thee,’ be it servant, master, or whosoever it may.

III. *Temperately, under divine love*.—To place the love of God above and before our love of any creature. As oil floating above the water causes the lamp to burn, so the love of God, floating above the love of the creature, causes the lamp of grace to burn. (Matt. xxii. 37, 38.) God is to be loved—1) Faithfully. The seat of trust is in the heart; and God said (Prov. xxiii. 26). 2) Reverently: ‘with all thy soul;’ for the word takes its origin from the soul. 3) Diligently: ‘all thy mind;’ putting God and His service above all things. (Matt. x. 37.)

IV. *Universally, without exception*.—(1 Thess. iii. 12; Matt. v. 44). We are not to make any exception, for we are not to judge one another; any such exception would be a judgment.

Epilogue.—Such love—1) destroys selfishness; 2) joins us as united with the whole Creation of God.

SERMON 389.

THE GREAT GULF.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.”—*Luke* xvi. 28.

Introduction.—‘This ‘gulf,’ ‘abyss,’ or ‘chaos’ signifies—
1) That the state for weal or woe remains fixed and unalterable after death. 2) Though the good and evil are mingled in this life, in the future they will be finally separated. ‘The great gulf’ implies a vast difference or separation, which is to be noted in the differences between—

I. *The Masters.*—Between Jesus Christ and the Devil: the former is full of love, goodness, and mercy; the latter is full of hate, sin, and cruelty. No concord. (2 Cor. vi. 15.) As with the masters so with their servants.

II. *The deserts.*—The reward is strictly according to merit; for (Rom. vi. 23; Gal. vi. 7, 8) as we are worked, so shall we earn either eternal life or eternal death.

III. *The wills.*—The righteous have their wills conformed to the will of God; all their resolutions are towards what is holy and good; the will of the wicked is hardened in evil, and has no part in holiness. (2 Cor. vi. 14.)

IV. *The affections.*—The righteous live in the perpetual love of God, and the wicked in an unending hatred of Him. As friends, the righteous cleave to God, follow hard after Him; as enemies, the wicked avoid Him.

The consciences.—The righteous have their consciences—
—1) Of a good savour. (2 Cor. ii. 15.) 2) Fresh and green. (Cant. i. 16.) 3. Entire. The consciences of the wicked are the reverse of this. (Isa. lxvi. 24.)

VI. *Dwelling-places.*—One above, the other below; one with angels, the other with devils.

Epilogue.—1) On which side of this gulf are you living?
2) As this life is, so will the future be, for good or evil, enlarged and expanded.

SERMON 390.**THE THREE STATES.—***(Holy Gospel, Ser. II.)*

“It came to pass that the beggar died.”—*Luke xvi. 22.*

Introduction.—How terrible and inscrutable is God in His councils concerning the children of men. God oftentimes reverses in eternity His dealings with the ungodly in time. Pharaoh and David both sinners: the former, unrepentant, died a violent death; the latter, repentant, went down to the grave in peace. The history of this gospel reveals our three states.

I. *A state of life.*—1) Of riches in which Dives trusted (*Luke xii. 19*); 2) of pleasures which he loved (*Dan. v. 3, 4*); 3) of honours by which he was puffed up. Lazarus, a contrast; who that he might be purged from past sins and preserved from future wickedness, endured poverty, infirmity, and degradation.

II. *A state of death.*—Which implies a sorrowful leaving of all Dives's blandishments; but which brought to Lazarus a bright expectation of good things to come. An agony of remorse to remember—1) sins committed; 2) duties and opportunities neglected; 3) lost pleasures.

III. *A state of judgment.*—A sepulchre and Hades; a poor grave and Paradise. (*Isa. xxii. 15, 16.*) The sepulchre of Shebna a type of that of the ‘rich man.’ In which note—1) the depth of his condemnation; 2) the vileness of his abjection; 3) the impossibility of his liberation.

Epilogue.—Contrast between this world and the next. Contrast the depth of the condemnation; the vileness of the degradation, the bitterness of the retribution; the impossibility of liberation; with the lot of him whom one angel alone did not suffice to carry into Paradise; but many angels came to him that they might raise a chorus of joy; they rejoiced to bear so great a burden. Not of necessity, but for honour, they performed this office.

SERMON 391.

THE LAW OF CONTRAST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“There was a certain rich man : and there was a certain beggar.”—*Luke*
xvi. 19, 20.

Introduction.—The contrasts between the lot of some as compared with that of others in this life is most marked, and it demands all our faith to recognize God's providence dealing out to each one that which He knows to be best for him. Contrast the life of a wealthy peer and of an artisan of the lowest grade. This history shows a sequel to the present seemly unequal distribution of God's blessings. Three points are to be noted in this history.

I. *Personal estate.*—1) In temporal possessions: one seemed to have all that this world gives, and the other was actually a beggar. 2) In bodily estate: one was clad in purple and fine linen, and the other lay naked and destitute, full of sores, at the rich man's gate. 3) In manner of life: one fared sumptuously every day, while the other longed even for the broken meat and crumbs which fell from the table of the rich. It was quite in the power of the rich man to lessen this inequality; to clothe, feed, and give some alms to the poor beggar, if he had desired so to do.

II. *Final consequence.*—A like end of life: both died. How different their earthly death-beds: one breathes his last amidst every luxury, the other in the direst extremity. Now the great contrast begins between the honourable reception in the quiet and rest of the bosom of Abraham; the port after the tempest and storms of life; being borne by angels from joy to perfect rest; and the horrible incarceration in hell in torments; having been baptized by the devil in the waters of lust.

III. *Infernal misery.*—1) In a tardy and too late knowledge of the real state of things. In hell he lifted up his eyes and saw the shortness of life, the vanity of the world, and the deformity of sin. 2) In a state of extreme poverty begged in vain for a drop of water. 3) Of utter desolation.

Epilogue.—The true end of life lies beyond the grave.

SERMON 392.

THE ARK AND DAGON.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”—*Luke* xvi. 25.

Introduction.—‘When they arose Dagon was fallen upon his face before the Ark of the Lord . . . only the stump of Dagon was left.’ This narrative in the Old Testament is a type of the teaching in the Holy Gospel for this day. The ‘Ark of the Lord’ is the Presence of the Lord; hence the Philistines were plagued with It, at Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. Lazarus is also a type of that Presence; for ‘the help of God’ implies the Presence of God. Lazarus is every humble soul, ‘poor in spirit.’ The ‘Ark’ contains the tables of love, the manna of patience, the rod of discipline. (*Isa.* lxvi. 2.) ‘Dives’ is a type of Dagon. Dagon as a ‘fish,’ swims through the sea of this world’s waters, seeking riches and ever grasping at prey. A fish-God, with body of a fish, but hands and head of a man. We note—

I. *A change of state.*—Ark lower than image of Dagon. Lazarus lay at rich man’s gate. Often thus in world; ungodly triumph, righteous are depressed. Afterwards ‘Dagon’ falls down before the Ark; the rich man lies low in Hades, in pain and humiliation. Lazarus rests exalted, happy, and honoured in Paradise. In vain the rich man now lifted up his eyes. (*Isa.* v. 30.) Wait—before honour is humility—hope. (*1 Cor.* i. 27.)

II. *A recompense.*—1) Head of Dagon cut off. Temporal excellency all lost. Head of riches, pride, and state, all laid low. Even as Lazarus bowed his head at rich man’s door—and afterwards was highly exalted. 2) Palms of hands. a) ‘power:’ riches bring power. b) ‘Abundance:’ all the means of enjoying life. 3) ‘Upon the threshold:’ at the ending of time and the entrance and coming in of eternity. What a threshold of glory to Lazarus! 4) Only stump of Dagon was left; only Dagon’s fish body; his naked soul. Unclothed, he goes to Hades his own place.

Epilogue.—1) Labour to gain true excellency and riches. 2) Guard against mistaking the false for the true.

SERMON 393.

THE GREAT PUNISHMENT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.”—*Luke* xvi. 23.

Introduction.—Looking at Dives, even without the aid of any fire, without any tortures being applied, his condition resolves itself into one of extreme suffering from four causes.

I. *Confinement.*—Hell is not one punishment but many punishments in one : an agonizing feeling to be buried alive : earth above, beneath ; on the right and on the left hand, fearful oppression, suffocation, and no escape. Dives so placed, hemmed in on all sides ; no escape ; misery everywhere present ; no change ; one perpetual, everlasting, restraint. (*Ezek.* xxxii. 22, 24, 26.) Confinement brings on the agony of—1) helplessness ; 2) weariness ; 3) of pent-up energy.

II. *The sight of the blessed.*—‘Seeth Abraham afar off ;’ seeth light, glory, and refreshment ; a severe contrast which awakens—1) remorse ; 2) hopelessness ; 3) envy. This might have been my portion. I threw away my golden opportunities of gaining heaven.

III. *The uselessness of prayer.*—Desperation as to any redress. Abraham could not send Lazarus if he wanted ; the drop of water is now withheld. Prayer of no avail ; for—1) punishment has begun ; 2) the day of mercy is past ; 3) the unalterable state is reached.

IV. *The fear of others so suffering.*—An agony to Dives lest his brethren should come to this place of torment. This leads to—1) an impotent fear ; 2) to a sympathy in sorrow ; 3) to an increase in suffering.

Epilogue.—Oh ! lose no time in securing salvation.

SERMON 394.

THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes.”—
Luke xvi. 22, 23.

Introduction.—A common wonder why the wicked are so prosperous: all are apt to say (Ps. lxxiii. 11-15) against this feeling. (Mal. ii. 17; iii. 13-16.) Look at their end before judging of the prosperity of the wicked. Dives had riches, with a short life and an eternal punishment. We exclaim, looking at his end (Ps. cxix. 137). Temporal blessings are given by God to three classes of men.

I. *To bad men.*—1) For an attractive sign: if possible—*a*) to enlighten them by His wisdom; *b*) to draw them by His clemency (Matt. v. 45); *c*) to bend them by His power. 2) For a satisfactory sign, giving a short recompense; for—*a*) a good and charitable use of temporal goods; *b*) bodily works of mercy and self-sacrifice; *c*) spiritual exercises, prayer, devotion, etc. 3) For an exemplary sign—*a*) His goodness; *b*) His benignity; *c*) and His bounty.

II. *To worse men.*—1) For a contemptible or despicable sign; giving to them things—*a*) vain (Ps. lxxiii. 20); *b*) dangerous (1 Tim. vi. 9); *c*) profitless (Matt. xvi. 36). 2) For an exercitative sign. (Habak. i. 3, 4.) That seeing how the wicked live, the righteous may be—*a*) moved to the likeness of Jesus Christ; *b*) perfected by suffering; *c*) manifested by the contrast of their lives. 3) For a primitive sign; since the sudden loss of—*a*) temporal, *b*) bodily, *c*) and spiritual blessings often falls upon them.

III. *To the worst men.*—1) For an intricative sign (Rev. xxii. 11); allowing men to be swallowed up—*a*) in avarice; *b*) in sensuality; *c*) in pride. 2) For a confusive sign—*a*) exalted to be cast down; *b*) enriched to be tormented; *c*) glorified to be confounded. 3) For a damnative sign; making them—*a*) blind, *b*) ungrateful, *c*) and sinful.

SERMON 395.

THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“There was a certain rich man; and there was a certain beggar.”—*Luke* xvi.
19, 20.

Introduction.—This solemn history brings before us the question, Shall we live for this world or for the next? Shall we walk by the eye of faith or leave punishment hereafter to open the eye that sin had closed? The Gospel for to-day reads us three lessons.

I. *The punishment which awaits sin.*—The rich man was not a sinner of the worst type. No murderer or adulterer; but a man who simply lived for this world alone. He liked the pomp, luxury, and ease of this world's life, and cared not to do good to others, nor to make any preparation for the life beyond the grave. Many, without being as rich as Dives, live a life in all things like his. A selfish worldling, he failed by his omissions, rather than by his commissions.

II. *The reward which awaits holy poverty.*—Nothing is more deplorable than such a life and condition as that of Lazarus. He humbly trusted in God, and accepted his lot; and in the end his affliction was turned to joy, his hunger to fulness, his labour to rest, his ignominy to honour.

III. *The deceitfulness of earthly blessings.*—These if lived in, and trusted in, fail at the last; they cannot preserve the soul from death. If the rich man was proud, covetous, and luxurious, we now see how deceptive were his honours, wealth, and carnal pleasures. ‘Cursed be he that maketh flesh his arm.’ (*Jer.* xvii. 5.)

Epilogue.—No temporal blessings are to be scorned; all are to be received and used with thankfulness: they are not to be wasted or neglected, but so applied that they may gain us God's favour and praise in the great day of account.

SERMON 396.

SELFISHNESS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“The rich man also died and was buried.”—*Luke xvi. 22.*

Introduction.—He is not mentioned by name because He is amongst the number of the reprobate whom the Lord knows not (*Matt. vii. 23*); who are (*Ps. lxix. 28*). On the other hand, the Lord said of, and to Moses (*Exod. xxxiii. 17*). Why was the rich man reprobated? Not because he was rich, or lived according to his proper station of life, but because he was thoughtless of all but himself. It was his pomp, vanity, luxury, and hardness of heart that led to his condemnation; all these being so many forms of selfishness. He abused his riches by his—

I. *Pride.*—Riches are a loan from God, to be used to His honour and glory, and for the relief of man's estate. They are not to be hoarded up; not to minister to the pomp of life; but to shed a blessing around them. Hard to learn this true responsibility of means. So (*Matt. xix. 23, 24.*) Pride leads to selfishness in the manner of life.

II. *Vanity.*—‘Clothed in purple.’ There is a dress proper to each station in life. It is right to dress up to, but not beyond, our station. Not to dress for display or for vainglory; not to unduly waste money that might be much more profitably spent. Vanity leads to selfishness also. All outward display is for others, not for ourselves.

III. *Luxury.*—‘Fared sumptuously;’ cared only about a sensual way of life; feasting up appetites that ought to be restrained; which leads to idolatry of soul. (*Exod. xxxii. 6.*) Hence the caution. (*Luke xxi. 34.*)

IV. *Hardness of heart.*—No pity for Lazarus (*Luke xvi. 21*), who asked for the slenderest relief and help. The pride, vanity, and luxury of selfishness had completely hardened the rich man's heart, as they harden all hearts.

Epilogue.—This condition of the rich man is a common state in every condition of life. The abuse of outward gifts leads to inward sin and corruption.

SERMON 397.

PROSPERITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water.”
—*Luke xvi. 24.*

Introduction.—Nothing so hardens the heart as a course of worldly, godless, prosperity. It blunts all our finer feelings of love, honour, and kindness for this life; and it drives out of the soul every thought of the future Judgment, and of the account which will one day have to be rendered to God. Prosperity makes the hardened rebel, without directly leading to any specific sin. This hardening power of prosperity is seen in three characteristics of the rich man in the Gospel.

I. *In his presumption.*—1) He still called Abraham ‘father,’ when he had forfeited all right to claim any relationship to him. He who does not fulfil the deeds of his master loses the right to be called his son. (John viii. 39.) Had he shown hospitality to Lazarus, as Abraham did to his guests, (Gen. xviii. 4, 5) then he would have been a child of Abraham. 2) He presumed to hope for mercy, who during his life had never shown any to others. (James ii. 13; Matt. vii. 2.) As a man sows so shall he also reap.

II. *In his want of natural feeling.*—1) He had left Lazarus to suffer all his life, and now he would call him from his place of rest to suffer again, by coming into his own torment. 2) He would recall him from Paradise to the miseries of this sinful life again. ‘Send him to my father’s house.’ The Lord wept (John xi. 35) when about to recall Lazarus to this sinful life again. Dives manifested now the same disregard to Lazarus that he had shown during life.

III. *In his foolishness.*—Thinking that one from the dead would be believed rather than the living, and the law of God. So Saul in his worst days summoned Samuel by witchcraft (1 Sam. xxviii. 7); despising the Lord’s prophets.

Epilogue.—Dives coveted for others the means he had despised for himself.

SERMON 398.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“He lift up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”—
Luke xvi. 23.

Introduction.—This revelation of a future state throws much light upon our mutual knowledge and recognition after death. Before the judgment we shall see, but not be able to pass over to what we see; we shall see what we have escaped, and the wicked will see what they have lost; our joy will increase their torment, and their torment will increase our joy. (Chrysost.) If there is so full and perfect a recognition in the intermediate and imperfect state, how much fuller will it be when the wicked are separated from the righteous, who will then enjoy the fullest love and friendship? In the intermediate and imperfect state, we note five kinds of mutual recognition. Between—

I. *The Righteous and the Righteous.*—Abraham knew Lazarus, and Lazarus knew Abraham. Both spirits; widely separated in time of life and death. A knowledge and a recognition by intuition.

II. *The Wicked and the Wicked.*—Dives felt sure that he should know his brothers, if they came to that place of torment; and so he wished to prevent their coming thither. An intuition amongst the wicked as amongst the righteous.

III. *The Righteous and the Wicked.*—Abraham and Lazarus both knew Dives; Abraham knew him and all about him, as well as he knew and received Lazarus.

IV. *The Wicked and the Righteous.*—Dives knew Abraham and Lazarus; he addressed them both by name.

V. *Those who have never met in the flesh.*—Abraham had never lived either with Lazarus or with Dives, yet he knew them both. A sympathetic knowledge, which is independent of circumstances.

Epilogue.—Learn—1) to hallow earthly intercourse; 2) to deepen every tie of life; 3) to walk in holy company, with whom eternity can be spent.

SERMON 399.

THE WORLD'S HATE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”—*John* iii. 13.

Introduction.—Man is a double subject; he belongs to two kingdoms: to earth, to heaven; to good, to evil; to light, to darkness; to God, and to Satan. He has a double nature too, consisting of body and soul. Man becoming altogether the subject of one kingdom, is hated by the other. The world has ever hated the Church. The hatred of the world is that—

I. *Of the Master falling upon the disciple*.—(*John* xv. 18).—‘Great consolation to the members from the head.’ (*Aug.*) (*Matt.* x. 24; *John* xv. 20.) Heavy sin to hate One Who did no harm; heavier still to hate One Who is so full of love, One Who did to the world so great good. (*Ps.* cix. 5.)

II. *Of those who, hating themselves, hate others*.—(*Ecclus.* xiv. 5).—‘He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good?’ The wicked hate themselves, for they love their vices, which really hate them. (*Ps.* xi. 6.) Sinners really hate themselves, and they hate others because they do so; they visit upon others their own self-dissatisfaction, the effects of their own shortcomings and ill deeds.

III. *Of those who regard Christians as strangers*.—The world has its home here; the Christian is but a stranger and a pilgrim in it. Hence the world’s hate. (*John* xvii. 14; xv. 19.)

IV. *Of those who hate their best friends*.—The sinner hates no one who loves his sin. The covetous hate those whom they ought to love: wife, children, and others. Thus (*Matt.* x. 36.) So was Elijah to Ahab. (*1 Kings* xxi. 20.) The honest and conscientious friend who gives good advice is too often hated.

V. *Of those who hate those who are unlike themselves*.—Likeness and sympathy produce friendship; distaste and difference produce hatred. (*Ecclus.* xiii. 20; *Wisd.* ii. 15.) The examples of Cain and Abel (*Gen.* iv. 5); Ishmael and Isaac (*Gen.* xxi. 9); Esau and Jacob (*Gen.* xxvii. 41).

Epilogue.—This hatred the Christian bears cheerfully and patiently, knowing (*Matt.* v. 11) and relying upon the benediction for support.

SERMON 400.

THE UNLOVING STATE A STATE OF DEATH.—

*(Epistle, Ser. II.)**"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."—John iii. 14.*

Introduction.—How much rather He who loveth not God? Let us note some of the evils which come into the world from the defect of love (Deut. xxx. 19, 20); which teaches—1) That God is life in Himself, and His life is His own essentially, and not accidentally, as it is in us. 2) God is the beginning and fountain of life to all. 3) That clinging to God by love is, at the same time, cleaving to life; and that want of love to God leads to death. The four deaths which befall the loveless are—

I. *Spiritual death: to be avoided.*—Eve loved the apple more than God, and Adam loved Eve more than he loved God; hence with the loss of grace came spiritual death; by which the soul remains dead in a living body; which body rejoices, eats, drinks, and decks itself out. (Matt. xxii. 27.) Of this spiritual death (Ezek. xviii. 20); and also (James i. 15). This death is consummated when the will consents to death; which it cannot do if we love God.

II. *Bodily death: to be provided for.*—(Heb. ix. 27.)—A consequence of spiritual death; without death in the soul, no death in the body. (Gen. ii. 17.) 'Die,' the sentence of death will pass upon thee on this day. Love joins us to Jesus Christ, Who then will be believed on by us, and be (John xi. 25). Provide for this death, by receiving the certainty of a glorious resurrection.

III. *Eternal death: to be feared.*—The perpetual condemnation of soul and body in hell. This is 'the second death' (Rev. xxi. 8); the eight sins of which all flow from want of love to God. Love is the ground of all pardon for sin. (Luke vii. 47.) When love commends pardon, the second death has lost its power. (1 John iii. 14)

Epilogue.—True love to God flows down to man; it restores the soul in this present life, and quickens it into life: hereafter it will quicken both soul and body, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON 401.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. I.*)

"A certain man made a great supper, and bade many."—*Luke xiv. 16.*

Introduction.—1) Herein is seen the exceeding goodness of God. The Eternal Father is, of His goodness, called 'Man:' for He assumed our nature by sending His Son to redeem us, and His Spirit (*John vii. 39*) to change us by adoption from servants to sons; and Himself became our Father. The goodness of God is thus seen in the spiritual economy. 2) In the nature of God Himself, in His natural, theological, and moral goodness. 3) In the goodness of His creation. (*Gen. i. 31.*) 4) In the greater goodness of Himself. (*Matt. xix. 17.*) The 'ruler' thought Jesus Christ was only man. 5) Because He communicates His goodness. From the light of heaven downwards all good is communicative; it perishes not by distribution. God extends His goodness to all states of being. To gain any notion of His goodness we must consider—

I. *The Majesty of God.*—Having His being in and from Himself; having immense magnitude, inexhaustible power, eternal justice, incomprehensible magnificence, infinite holiness, incomparable glory, inscrutable wisdom, infallible knowledge, ineffable goodness, unending blessedness; He communicates Himself to us.

II. *Our own condition.*—Sinners, mortal, enemies, ungrateful, proud, carnal; careless of heaven.

III. *The great gifts of His goodness.*—1) Eternal life and happiness; 2) supernatural grace; 3) angelic guardianship; 4) a body, the fitting instrument of the mind; 5) the whole resources of the world.

IV. *The manner of this goodness.*—Communicated more mercifully and bountifully than a prince communicates to his servants, a father to his sons. (*John iii. 16.*)

V. *The end of this communicated goodness.*—Which is for our welfare and salvation and for God's glory.

Epilogue.—Let us rest in God's goodness; believe, hope, and love, because He is so good; in every condition cast ourselves upon it, saying with S. Ambrose, 'I do not fear to die, we have so good a Lord.'

SERMON 402.

THE EXCUSERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“They all with one consent began to make excuse.”—*Luke* xiv. 18.

Introduction.—To partake of this supper of salvation requires some effort upon the part of the guests. It involves a giving up of the soul to God; it implies a resolution to lead a holy life. Let us test the weakness of these three classes of excusers.

I. *The buyer of land, or pride.*—1) ‘I have bought’ that which is an hindrance to salvation; spent substance which harms instead of profiting. 2) ‘I must;’ receiving the lordship of temporal possession, he himself falls into servitude. Worldly possessions make us slaves. 3) ‘Go;’ he who was intended for the guardianship of others became careless of his own custody. (Cant. i. 6.) 4) ‘And see it;’ which ought to have been done before, and not after, the purchase. (Prov. xxxi. 16.) 5) The neglect of a certainty for an uncertainty. The ground may be profitable, but (Eccles. v. 11).

II. *The buyer of oxen, or covetousness.*—The lovers of gain and temporal good things, who, being led by the five senses to things low and earthly, lose eternal gain, and reject that true feast of the soul which faith alone can furnish. Such accept the small, and reject the great.

III. *The newly married, or sensuality.* The worst excuse of all; since a wife was given by God as a helpmeet to man (Gen. ii. 18), and therefore ought to be a help rather than a hindrance to any one who is invited to the supper. If by the wife be understood the lusts of the flesh, these do indeed paralyze a man, so that he is compelled to say truly, “I cannot come.” (Hosea v. 4.)

Epilogue.—(Matt. vi. 33.)—This is the one possession of all possessions. All ought to come to this supper, even under circumstances of difficulty and danger, so as at last to gain eternal salvation.

SERMON 403.

THE FOURFOLD SUPPER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“A certain man made a great supper, and bade many.”—*Luke* xiv. 16.

Introduction.—The three excusers represent the world, the flesh, and the devil; or pride, sensuality, and avarice; (1 *John* ii. 16), or Joab's three darts. (2 *Sam.* xviii. 14.) In the temptation, we note the ‘lust of flesh,’ ‘good for food;’ ‘of eyes,’ ‘pleasant to the eyes;’ ‘pride of life’ ‘and to make one wise.’ So in our Lord's temptation, the three temptations were in exactly the same order. ‘Lust of the eyes,’ or avarice, against the Father; ‘of the flesh, against the Holy Ghost;’ ‘the pride of life,’ against God the Son Himself. We are invited to four great suppers, by partaking of which these temptations can be overcome.

I. *A penitential supper.*—(*Rev.* iii. 20.)—Rousing, by infusing a sorrow for sin, the heart of the sinner. Jesus Christ seeking to enter into it by habitual grace, and to refresh it with His visitation and friendship. Such a supper did the Lord make with Matthew the publican on His conversion, and with the Prodigal Son; the food being (*Rom.* xiv. 17). To this knocking some do—1) not open doors of heart: the ‘piece of ground’ is sin admitted into the soul. 2) Bar up the door; ‘the five yoke of oxen’ are sins of habit often repeated; a heavy yoke, known but delighted in. 3) Laugh at the knocking; being deeply sunk in sensual sin.

II. *An Evangelical supper of the Gospel.*—To which Jesus Christ and His Apostles called all the world. The old law was a midday meal; the new law of the Gospel is the spiritual banquet, or the end of the world. Before which men put—1) honour and fame; 2) gain; 3) the opinion of neighbours and friends.

III. *A Eucharistic supper.*—Instituted in the evening after the Passover, at the end of the life of Jesus Christ, and the last food of the dying. 1) Too busy; 2) too much involved in strifes and contentions; 3) too unholy and impure.

IV. *A beatific supper.*—(*Rev.* xix. 9.) No excuse at this supper. All the invited are already prepared to come.

Epilogue.—Let nothing hinder you from suffering with Jesus Christ when He asks you so to do.

SERMON 404.

INDWELLING SIN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“They all with one consent began to make excuse.”—*Luke* xiv. 18.

Introduction.—This ‘certain man’ is our Blessed Lord, Who makes ‘a great supper’ of holiness, by showing the way to become holy; giving the Spirit of holiness to man. Holiness brings with it a feast upon God’s promises, a life and walk of faith. No one really wishes to refuse this supper, to be absolutely wicked, but all try to excuse sin. Three excuses are mentioned in this Gospel. Eve tried to excuse her sin. (Gen. iii. 12.) A very common excuse is, the weakness and sinfulness of our nature; ‘I wish to be good, but I cannot.’ (Rom. vii. 22-24.) Now, God left weakness and sin in our nature, as he left the nations in the land of Canaan. (Judges iii. 1.)

I. *To teach us our frailty.*—To keep us humble. S. Paul’s thorn in the flesh. (2 Cor. xii. 7.) To teach us not to trust in ourselves; in our strength; our wisdom; all of which desert us in our hour of need. (Jer. xvii. 5.) That we may fully learn how full of sin and infirmity we are. So being humbled we receive a sword of grace (Luke xxii. 36; Matt. xxvi. 56), for defence, not for revenge.

II. *To keep us ever on our guard.*—Who would go into a gunpowder magazine with a lighted torch? (1 Cor. x. 12.) David fell through want of watchfulness. Our will is ever to be exercised in defending the affections from the assaults of Satan.

III. *To make us worthy of receiving a reward.*—Those who strive worthily gain victories and receive rewards. (Josh. xxi. 43.) Canaan not yet really given or gained. Earlier victories a pledge of the later ones. Indwelling sin is as the weights which keep the machinery of clocks in working order. All great triumphs of the world have been made in the face of the greatest obstacles.

Epilogue.—1) Weakness of nature no excuse even before man. 2) Lose no opportunity of receiving holiness.

SERMON 405.

THE FEASTS OF GOOD AND EVIL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“A certain man made a great supper, and bade many.”—*Luke* xiv. 16.

Introduction.—In ordering a banquet on a very large scale, it is necessary to consider—1) The season of the year: whether the guests can travel without danger and inconvenience, whether it be too wet or too cold. 2) The room required: that the guests may be all seated in comfort. 3) That an ample supply be procured of the best provisions. 4) How long it will last, lest the servitors be wearied. All these points Jesus Christ considered, when He prepared His supper of grace. He sent His servants, etc., at—1) a time of grace and mercy; 2) the room is heaven, large enough for all the guests; 3) He made a great provision of food; 4) the supper is to last for ever. Alas! there are suppers of evil as well as of good; and we notice—

I. *The supper of sin.*—To which the sinner invites the devil. Such a supper of deadly sin was Herod's (*Mark* vi. 21), in which the righteous was slain; he who preached repentance and amendment. Many make this supper, feeding upon lies rather than upon truth; upon envy rather than upon love, etc.

II. *The supper of hell.*—To which the devil invites all sinners after death. (*Rev.* xix. 17-19.) Kings and captains, the avaricious and the proud. Represented by the dream of Pharaoh's baker (*Gen.* xl. 16-20); the three baskets contain pride, covetousness, and sensuality; and the days are—1) of birth; 2) of life; 3) of death.

III. *The supper of grace.*—Made in the pure heart by Jesus Christ and His angels. (*Rev.* iii. 20.) The food consists of—1) Saving doctrine. (*Matt.* iii. 4.) 2) Repentance. (*Ps.* xlii. 3.) 3) Sacrament. (*John* vi. 51.)

IV. *The supper of glory.*—Great, as being—1) made by a great prince; 2) as containing many guests (*Rev.* vii. 9); 3) as being so glorious. (*Ps.* cxxi. 3.)

Epilogue.—Seek to partake of the latter, and shun the former suppers.

SERMON 406.

WORLDLY HINDERANCES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“I have bought five yoke of oxen; I pray thee have me excused.”—*Luke* xiv. 19.

Introduction.—As the ‘piece of ground’ signifies pride; and marriage, sensuality; so does this excuse signify worldly cares and desires, which hinder us from coming to the supper of grace. Such fill their souls with earthly things, and sup with Satan. (*Gen.* iii. 14.) The ‘five yoke of oxen’ represent the five senses, by which men long for and are bound to earthly things; unable either to see or care for other things than those which they see with their bodily eyes. The excuse for this worldly servitude can be made in a threefold spirit; which is—

I. *Palliative*.—When one pleads a natural necessity, ‘the needs of life keep me from this feast.’ Dreading temporal poverty, men fall into spiritual poverty without any concern; fearing a remedial and temporal necessity, not fearing to fall into eternal poverty and loss. Others excuse themselves because they ‘follow the multitude to do evil,’ as if suffering was not increased by community. Covetousness is the beast of (*Rev.* xiii. 11-17). Plead no necessity for putting time before eternity, the devil before God.

II. *Presumptive*.—Such do not despise the supper of the Gospel; they mean to partake of it ‘some day;’ they presume upon a long life; upon having many years before them, when not a moment can be called their own. (*Acts* i. 7; *Luke* xii. 20.)

III. *Contemnive*.—Despising other things than can be seen and known by the eyes of the body. Such were the Pharisees. (*Luke* xvi. 13, 14.) Hence the Lord said (*Matt.* vi. 24). Such despise the life of faith, and look down superciliously upon followers of the Cross.

Epilogue.—Beware, lest love of temporal things deprive you of eternal blessings, and bring to you incurable and irremediable loss. That man cannot be pitied who could have had all blessings for the mere asking, yet who languished in want and misery; feeding rather upon rotten fruits and the foam of the sea.

SERMON 407.

THE HEAVENLY SUPPER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“A certain man made a great supper.”—*Luke* xiv. 16.

Introduction.—This heavenly supper is described (*Rev.* xix. 9), when the purified and glorified Bride of Jesus Christ (*Eph.* v. 27) is presented to Him, the Bridegroom; a supper, which will be celebrated when the new creation shall be manifested in perfection and glory. Then shall all the elect be gathered together (*Matt.* viii. 11), and all that holy souls have struggled for, waited for, and longed for, from the beginning of the world, will be perfected for ever; and the heavenly city shall be filled with the perfect number of its citizens. This will be a feast of the ever-Blessed Trinity; for—

I. *God the Father will supply*—1) A full completion and quietude to every will and desire. (*John* xiv. 8.) Consumed with unsatisfied longings here, waiting for something after death; a perfect fruition then. 2) The full possession of all good things. (*1 Cor.* ii. 9.) 3) The clear and open vision of His own glorious face. (*1 John* iii. 2; *Isa.* xxxiii. 17.) The Beatific vision.

II. *God the Son will supply*—1) Satiety in His humanity (*John* vi. 35); our manhood will be perfected by His manhood, and nothing of imperfection will be left in it. 2) Satiety in His divinity. (*John* xiv. 23.) The perfections of the Godhead given to God's children by adoption. 3) The bread of life. (*John* vi. 35.) A spiritual feeding upon an eternal Eucharist (*John* x. 9): ‘in,’ by the consideration of His divinity; and ‘out,’ of His humanity.

III. *God the Holy Ghost will supply*—1) The fire of love, by which the viands will be dressed. (*Isa.* xxxi. 9.) 2) Wine for the inebriation of the saints. (*Psa.* xxxvi. 8.) 3) Fruits for delight. (*Gal.* v. 22-24.)

Epilogue.—Many despise this feast, having no experience of spiritual delights, which once tasted, evermore are loved.

SERMON 408.

THE RECIPIENTS OF GRACE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)

“Bring in hither the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind.”—
Luke xiv. 21.

Introduction.—Four conditions of men are named in the present Gospel as being called to the ‘supper,’ as obeying the voice of God calling them, and as being finally admitted to it. These conditions represent four states and exercises of graces necessary to the faithful, and most profitable in leading them to that eternal blessedness which is here signified by ‘a great supper.’ We note—

I. *The poor.*—‘Poor’ in affection and quality of mind; who are content with a small supply of temporal blessings, and do not aspire to greater riches: who, neither stuffed up nor laden with money, more quickly and lightly so walk along the way of this life, that more securely and safely they attain the goal of the heavenly country. Hence (Ps. xxxvii. 16); with which agrees (Proy. xv. 16; xvi. 8). The rich in possessions may be poor, if (Ps. lxi. 10). To the poor in spirit is promised the Kingdom. (Matt. v. 3.) Such were the fathers of the Old Testament, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, David, and the rest.

II. *The maimed.*—Maimed, or weak; not in the exercise of holiness, like the wicked servant. (Matt. xxv. 26.) Against such weakness. (Eccles. ix. 10.) The weak in their own estimation, who attribute all their success to God. Weak in themselves, strong in God. (2 Cor. iii. 5; Phil. iv. 13.)

III. *The halt.*—They who consider their own defects, and attend to the halting of their own souls; humbling themselves in God’s sight, and asking to be delivered from all death and halting. So S. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 9; 1 Tim. i. 13-15.)

IV. *The blind.*—Not the blind of (Ps. lxxxii. 5; Matt. xv. 14). Blind to sin. (Gen. xxxix. 9.) David saw. (2 Sam. xi. 2.)

SERMON 409.

THE MEANS OF SALVATION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Compel them to come in.”—*Luke* xiv. 23.

Introduction.—(1 S. Tim. ii. 3, 4) teaches us that God desires the salvation of all men; if men fail to gain this, it is because they do not use the helps which God has given to them; and apply themselves to the means of salvation furnished by Him; these are chiefly—

I. *Redemption by Jesus Christ.*—After the Fall, redemption came by the Incarnation and Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which was offered for all men. (2 Cor. v. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 6.) It is sufficient for all. He is a Sun of Righteousness, both able and willing to enlighten and warn all men by His rays of grace, unless they voluntarily skulk in the darkness of sin.

II. *Streams of sacramental grace.*—Full, flowing, open to all. (Zech. xiii. 1.) No lack, save on the part of those who will not drink. (Rev. xxii. 17; John vii. 3-7.)

III. *The voices of God.*—Speaking—1) By His preachers; calling, exhorting, warning, promising, and threatening. 2) By His providences: leading the mind upwards from effect to the cause, which is His will. 3) By the inspirations of His grace and spirit: which move, draw, and change the heart.

IV. *The freedom of the will.*—Of the sinner (Hosea xiii. 9); ‘destroyed thyself.’ (Deut. xxx. 19; Isa. v. 4). The vine had power to bear, or not to bear. Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh, both kings; both wicked; both with judgment given against them; both held the Israelites captive; one repented; the other was lost. Judas and Peter, both Apostles, both warned (Matt. xxvi. 50, 73); both denied the Lord; but one repented, whilst the other was lost.

Epilogue.—All desire salvation; many fail to gain it, who desire it. (Prov. xiii. 4.) Wishing only to reign with Jesus Christ, not to suffer with Him; to enter life, and not to keep the commandments; to obtain the victory without fighting; to gain the crown without merit. Such have yet to learn the meaning of. (Rom. viii. 18.)

SERMON 410.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“A certain man . . . shall taste of my supper.”—*Luke xiv. 16-25.*

Introduction.—The Gospel of Jesus Christ is one signification of this ‘supper.’ Exhibited ‘in these last days,’ furnished with various foods and graces, it thoroughly satisfies the guests. It is ‘great,’ as being open to all, and prepared by the great God. Received, it leads to great and eternal happiness; rejected, to great and eternal misery. We taste of a few of the dishes offered to us in this supper, which are adapted to all estates of men. For—

I. *Superiors learn*—1) Not to slight or despise the poor. ‘Bring in hither the poor.’ The sceptre of kings took formerly the representation of a plough. King Edward the Confessor carried a lame beggar on his back to church. 2) To bridle their anger; so the ‘man’ did, and filled his table with other guests. ‘Nothing can be either rightly done or thought of in an angry mood.’

II. *Inferiors learn*—1) To obey their masters. These servants went and called. 2) To advise their masters even to their own loss or extra trouble, having an eye to the master’s interest only. 3) To give an account of their offices; ‘it is done as thou hast commanded.’

III. *Rich learn*—1) Not to buy land, oxen, or things of the world, without they are first seen and proved. 2) Not to place the use and proof of such things before the fruition and use of grace. 3) Not overload themselves with cares and burdens. 4) Not to live in things outward, to the exclusion of things mental and divine.

IV. *The poor learn*—That the good things of God are prepared for them; for them a table is prepared.

V. *Christians learn*—1) That there is no salvation, if ‘the rule of faith’ be not adhered to. 2) To be obedient, and not to omit any means of grace.

SERMON 411.

THE CARE OF GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Casting all your care upon Him: for He careth for you.”—1 *Peter* v. 7.

Introduction.—The care of God for us is a thought full of comfort. We never can be left, save by our own will, utterly destitute, and uncared for, and forlorn. This thought prevents us from feeling over-anxiety about worldly concerns. (Luke xii. 22-30.) God cares for us in a threefold way.

I. *In taking providential forethought.*—By the law of nature He provides for us as being our Creator. He adapted the world for our dwelling-place, and we ourselves minister to each other. Unless sin hinders, God provides for us. If a son be not wholly unworthy, his father provides for him. (Matt. vi. 32.) Our Lord God cares for us, as a good nobleman does for all his servants and his tenants on the estate.

II. *In healing our infirmities.*—If we humbly confess our infirmities to God, we shall be helped by His saving counsel. If the surgeon is to heal, the wound must be uncovered. Jesus Christ began our healing, we trust to Him to perfect His work, and that our sin may not hinder it. (Isa. liii. 5; Hosea vi. 1.)

III. *In disciplining us to His Will.*—(Heb. xii. 6-10.)—Refusing God's discipline we refuse His rule, which is to lead us onwards to the perfection of eternal life.

Epilogue.—It is our duty to cast ourselves upon God's care. 1) Seeking Him earnestly when lost (Cant. iii. 2); 2) striving not to offend Him when found (Micah vi. 8); 3) to please Him (Ecclus. ii. 19); 4) to prepare the heart as a dwelling-place for Him (1 Sam. vii. 3); 5) to render to Him a due account of life. (Luke xvi. 2.) So will all things be done as in God's sight.

SERMON 412.

FIVE ACTS OF HUMILITY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God.”—1 *Peter* v. 6.

Introduction.—There is often a great contrast between the present and the future life; the exalted in the one, are often the most humbled in the other. The scales are in the hand of God, the left hand is this present life; the right hand signifies the life to come. Present humility which leads to future exaltation can be expressed under five forms. The humility—

I. *Of reverence: expressed in prayer.*—Which leads to a comparison between the Majesty of God and the nothingness of man. As a dog before a man, and a man before a king, so is a king before the King of kings. (*James* iv. 10.) In the sight of God in the congregation (*Matt.* xviii. 19), and especially at the Holy Communion, which is His footstool. (*Ps.* xcix. 5.)

II. *Of obedience: in action.*—Looking to its reward, which by grace is most great for the smallest service. The seeking and honouring God and His Sabbath, and doing our duty to our neighbours; the keeping the Decalogue, brings with it eternal life. Of such obedience. (*Matt.* xi. 29, 30.)

III. *Of repentance: in confession.*—(*Luke* xiii. 3; xv. 18; *Ps.* xxxii. 5.)—Which awakens the memory of past sin and its punishment, and reveals the hollowness of outward fame and the opinions of men. Confession of sin to God shows us our true selves in all their grossness and deformity.

IV. *Of patience: in suffering.*—Feeling it impossible to escape from the hand of God, when He gives poverty, sickness, loss, etc. So Job (*Job* i. 21, 22). We need entire humility to be as a camel, or as a dog, to their masters, who crouch to receive the fitting chastisement. God demands a strict, stern, undeviating humility of will.

V. *Of wisdom: in conversation.*—From a consideration of the danger of pride and the security of humiliation; that the gate of heaven is small and narrow (*Matt* vii. 14); so that we already laden (*Matt.* xi. 28) with greater additions could not enter.

Epilogue.—True humility is the expression of a life.

SERMON 413.

THE FESTIVAL OF SOULS—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”—*Luke xv. 10.*

Introduction.—These words excite us to hope, and take away from us the place in which we can despair. The devil seeks to make us ‘curse God and die,’ or to feel with Cain (*Gen. iv. 13*); but the heavenly host unite in joy, and so the text speaks in words of hope. A wild beast has been captured, and the desire for venison satisfied. (*Gen. xxvii. 4.*) A great cure has been wrought; a deliverance from death effected. The joy is of a great victory, upon which God and His holy angels are looking down. If man by grace overcomes the devil, then indeed he is (*1 Cor. iv. 9*). Not merely ‘joy,’ but a great feast flows from the conversion of a sinner. Such a conversion is a—

I. *Birthday.*—A child of God is born of a double birth. 1) By a new conception of the soul (*Isa. xxvi. 18*); ‘wind,’ the breath of salvation. Abraham rejoiced at Sarah’s conception, and Zachariah at Elizabeth’s; and shall not Jesus Christ be joyful at the conception of His spouse—the Church? 2) By a new birth, when holiness in action succeeds the new birth of the spirit. Great festival at S. John’s birth. (*Luke i. 58.*)

II. *Resurrection.*—A child of God hath been raised from spiritual death (*Rev. xx. 6*), having been passed from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

III. *Restoration.*—The converted soul is dowered by the Holy Ghost, and receives its heirship; and the spirit that had been driven away by sin, has now by repentance come back again, as a king to his royal city. (*2 Sam. xix. 39, 40.*)

IV. *A royal coronation.*—(*Eccles. iv. 14*). Also (*Eccles. ix. 4*.) The ‘living dog’ is the penitent soul; ‘dead lion’ is the unworthy Christian.

Epilogue.—Such is the work that Jesus Christ has done for the sons of men.

SERMON 414.

THE RECEIVER OF SINNERS—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)“This Man receiveth sinners.”—*Luke* xv. 2.

Introduction.—All sinners lying under the condemnation of their guilt may take hope, since the mercy of Jesus Christ exceeds their guilt. S. Peter’s tears washed away his denial. Jesus Christ as the true Jephtha (*Judges* xi. 2, 3, 6) ‘suffered without the gate;’ then was He recalled to be our Prince and Saviour. True justice breeds compassion; false justice, indignation only. Four conditions of sinners whom the Lord receives—

I. *The wanderer.*—The Lord welcomes the erring, wandering sinner, as a poor pilgrim is received into an hostel. The sinner is poor, as sold to Satan by his sin; poor, as lacking grace; poor, being under the condemnation of sin. Ben-hadad is the poor sinner (*1 Kings* xx. 31-34) coming to the King of Israel who is Jesus Christ.

II. *The captive.*—One who has long been under Satan as a slave; one formerly rebellious but now corrected. Such were loaded with worldly cares. Shimei, a rebellious subject, was pardoned; but was not allowed to transgress; he did so, and was slain. (*1 Kings* ii. 36 to end.)

III. *The son.*—As a man who had lost his birthright and his all; yet as a son whom the father sees equally impelled by fear and love, and the more prepared to obey him. Prodigal Son. (*Luke* xv. 18.)

IV. *The bride.*—Once erring (*Hos.* ii. 7, 14, 15) but now reclaimed, and beyond measure beloved; which is required to be first purified from past sin, and then to be embraced. (*Jer.* xii. 7.) Esther, the contemplative soul (*Esther* v. 2), comes unto the King, Jesus Christ, with her two attendants, conformity of will and purity of love.

Epilogue.—A full hope for all true penitents; for where sin abounds, there much more abounds the love of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 415.

CONSCIENCE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle.”—*Luke* xv. 8.

Introduction.—In the heavens two lights, the sun and the moon; on earth, two lights also, law and conscience. Law as the sun instructs man in external actions: conscience as the moon, shows the light of truth in his inmost actions. The law is the sun (*Prov.* vi. 23); the moon is the conscience (*Ps.* iv. 6.) ‘Conscience is the light of the mind.’ (*John Damas.*) Use conscience as a lamp in all your actions. Conscience in its several offices is comparable with—

I. *A book faithfully teaching us.*—What is to be done or left undone. ‘The dead are the best counsellors,’ *i.e.* books, in which we faithfully learn what we ought to do, without fear or favour. (*Chrysost.*) This light shines without respect of persons; showing things as they are, without deceit. (*Isa.* li. 7; *Ps.* xxxvii. 31.)

II. *A schoolmaster or pedagogue.*—Restraining us from sin, moving us to goodness. ‘Conscience is like a pedagogue, a certain associate and governor of the mind; it advises it as to what is good, it reproves and convicts it of sin.’ (*Aug.*) Conscience is a bridle before sin, a scourge after it. It is a preceptor given to us by God. David’s conscience towards Saul. (*1 Sam.* xxiv. 5, 6.)

III. *An inevitable and uncorrupt witness.*—Of all our thoughts, words, and deeds. (*Chrysost.*) A tribunal which every one carries about with him, and from which none can escape. ‘A true and domestic tribunal.’ (*Greg.*) A debtor promised to pay a creditor on a certain day, who died meanwhile. No one knew of it, but the debtor brought the money to the house, saying, ‘You who are dead to others are alive to me.’

IV. *The executioner and torturer of the wicked.*—A guilty conscience is a certain hell and prison of the soul. The consciousness of sin is the greatest tribulation of the human soul. (*Isa.* lvi. 24; *Mark* ix. 44.) It is the never-dying worm.

Epilogue.—(*Matt.* v. 25).—‘Adversary’ is conscience. Have the answer of a good conscience in the way of this life, or our advocate will become our accuser at the Judgment-seat.’

SERMON 416.

THE JOY OF REPENTANCE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.”—*Luke xv. 10.*

Introduction.—Greater joy in the instauration of man than at the creation of angels, for they were wonderfully created, but man is more wonderfully restored. Joy in heaven and with the angels, not over the human race alone, but over the restoration of the soul of every single sinner. Not over the sinner who is only—1) thinking about repentance and putting it off; 2) talking about repentance; 3) pretending to repentance: but over the sinner who is actually repentant now. The General loves that soldier, who having shown himself to be a coward, returns and strongly presses the enemy, perhaps more than a soldier who has never shown either courage or cowardice. The race is more loved than any single man of it; the righteous before the restored penitent; but there is more joy manifested on account of the change. This joy arises from—

I. *The leading back.*—The sinner has wandered away from—1) God; 2) himself; 3) Divine grace and truth. Jesus Christ came as the Good Shepherd to lead back the wandering to Himself. ‘The way.’ (John xii. 32; Jer. xxxi. 3.) Drawn thee from the paths of—1) sin; 2) sorrow; 3) shame; to the paths of—1) holiness; 2) joy; 3) glory.

II. *The uniting.*—The reclaimed are joined to the reclaimer by a community of—1) nature; 2) gratitude; 3) pursuit. Hence the reclaimed are all ‘friends and neighbours. (John x. 16; xi. 51, 52.) The Only-begotten Son of God made many sons by His Blood. He brought many brethren to Himself; He recommended the reprobate; He redeemed the soul; He quickened the slain.

III. *The rejoicing.*—Ps. xxx. 11. [See Sermon for this Sunday, No. 413.]

Epilogue.—Take care lest, either from negligence or procrastination, you be excluded from so great a joy. Be not like the foolish virgins thinking of repentance too late.

SERMON 417.

THE RECEIVED OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. V.)

“This Man receiveth sinners.”—*Luke xv. 2.*

Introduction.—We change our country either because we are under a cruel government, as the Israelites were in Egypt (Exod. xii. 42), or because we know of some better master to serve; or a richer country in which to live. The Israelites left the service of Pharaoh to serve God; the land of Egypt for ‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ Pharaoh is Satan and sin; Canaan is the heavenly country as opposed to the world. As the Israelites fled to God, so we must fly to Jesus Christ. Who receives—

I. *Fugitives for protection.*—Many fly for protection to Jesus Christ because of His power to aid and protect them. (Ps. xxiv. 8.) As David fled to Achish at Gath, so we should fly to Jesus Christ. (1 Sam. xxvii. 3.) When the devils, the lords of Achish, speak against the soul, Jesus Christ bears His testimony in her favour. (1 Sam. xxix. 4, 6.)

II. *The desolate for grace.*—Our Lord receives the desolate and desperate by His grace, if they desire pardon. (John vi. 37.) The austere King sends forth His Son of Mercy, Who betroths Himself to a beautiful damsel, the human soul; and in the day of these espousals heralds are sent from heaven offering—1) rest (Matt. xi. 28); 2) pardon (John viii. 11); 3) hope (1 John iii. 14).

III. *The ignorant for instruction.*—(Col. ii. 3.)—Our Blessed Lord in the synagogue taught the new law as Ezra had taught the old (Neh. viii. 5, 6); so that the Jews said. (Luke vii. 10.)

IV. *The warriors to receive their crown.*—They who have striven successfully for the faith against the world, the flesh, and the devil, shall be rewarded with—1) Rev. ii. 17; 2) Rev. ii. 11; 3) Rev. ii. 17; 4) Rev. ii. 26; 5) Rev. iii. 12, a pillar of victory; 6) Rev. iii. 21; 1 Peter iv. 13.

Epilogue.—Come to Jesus Christ. (Phil. iv. 19.)

SERMON 418.

CONTACT WITH SINNERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“The Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners.”—
Luke xv. 2.

Introduction—Had our Blessed Lord been only man, we could not have blamed them for so doing. A man is marked by his companions. Jesus Christ was, whilst on earth, the great Physician visiting the world's sickness. If we associate with the wicked and the profane, not Pharisees alone, but angels also, will murmur; and we, the companions of sinners, likewise will partake of their punishment. Save to do them good, we must avoid contact with sinners; noting—

I. *Some examples of sinful association.*—1) Mountains of Gilboa cursed (2 Sam. i. 21); they paid the penalty of having seen a king slain. If it be so for wickedness done simply on them, the whole city, street, or house, is in far greater danger from the sin which is wrought in it. Destructions of Jerusalem and Nineveh. 2) Barren fig-tree cursed (Matt. xxi. 19); not alone as representing the unfruitful Jews (Bede), or as showing the arbitrary selections or power of Jesus Christ (Chrysost.), but because the leaves afforded covering for sinners. (Gen. iii. 7.) If the trees were smitten from their association with man, how much more will man be so for his association with sin and sinners? 3) Sixth day of creation was not blessed. (Gen. i. 31.) Why? Because the serpent was hereafter to be cursed, who was a type of sin, was created on this day. 4) Disciples were, all but three, hindered by the presence of Judas (Matt. xvii. 1) from witnessing the transfiguration. S. Ambrose thinks that his presence was the cause of the tempest on the sea. 5) Zidon, as being near to Judah, and the birth country of Jezebel, was smitten with Israel's famine. (1 Kings xvii. 12.)

II. *The great danger of consort with sinners.*—1) The great loss to Adam and Eve (Gen. iii. 13); 2) lost security in the presence of the serpent; 3) a tradition (John viii. 5) that the Jews hoped to stone Jesus Christ Himself with the adulteress.

Epilogue.—(Gen. i. 4.)—The good from the evil (Gen. xlix. 29); Jacob did not like to rest amongst idolators. Be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing.

SERMON 419.

THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VII.)

“This Man receiveth sinners.”—*Luke xv. 2.*

Introduction.—Why was not man created sinless? If God is not able, He is not omnipotent; if He did not will it, He was not most kind. God, the wisest of all artificers, desires man to be sinless and to be free (1 Thess. iv. 2), and the effectual working of His grace exists with perfect liberty. World was created for showing the perfections of God: heaven, His bounty to the holy; hell His judgment against the wicked; and man His love and mercy. (Ps xlv. 9.) This mercy could not have been shown to man unless he had sinned. (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.)

I. *Three types of this love.*—1) (Gen. xxviii. 13.) The ladder was resting upon Jesus Christ, Who humbled Himself in order to exalt others. Angels, converted sinners; ascending from Him justified, descending to Him to be pardoned. 2) (Cant. ii. 9) As the stag devours serpents, so Jesus Christ devours our sins and sinners; the conversion of whom forms His sweetest food. 3) (Gen. xxv. 28) As Jacob loved wild flesh better than tame, so does Jesus Christ love sinners. (John iv. 34.)

II. *Six mysteries of this love.*—1) (Matt. iv. 17.) His first sermon to sinners. 2) (Matt. iv. 2.) His ministry began in hunger. 3) (John xix. 39.) It ended in thirst. 4) (Luke v. 29.) Great company of publicans to be converted and saved. 5) (Luke xiv. 1.) No praise of the meal; His desired food not there. (John iv. 32.) 6) (John iv. 7.) Thirsty, so willing to drink. ‘I thirst,’ for the salvation of souls; to give, not to take drink.

III. *Cruelty of the sinner towards Jesus Christ.*—(Matt. xxv. 24.)—Said of those who lived before Him, with Him, and after Him; to every poor man with only a morsel of bread, nay, to one dying of hunger, who gives them no repentance. (Isa. ix. 20.)

Epilogue.—Receive Jesus in your soul since He wants to receive you.

SERMON 420.

THE GROUNDS OF SAVING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“This Man receiveth sinners.”—*Luke xv. 2.*

Introduction.—Although we may not ‘murmur,’ yet we may wonder with the Pharisees at this. The owner seeks both wool and flesh from his sheep, so he is anxious to lose none. No gain to Jesus Christ from the one sheep, human nature ; which had gone astray in the wilderness of this world. Why then did He come down from heaven, and endure so much to seek and to save us ?

I. *For the sake of God the Father.*—1) To fulfil the will of God. (John vi. 38, 39.) So the Apostle (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.) Jesus Christ, before all things, is most anxious to fulfil His Father’s will. Eleazar would not eat till his Lord’s will had been declared. (Gen. xxiv. 33.) Our Lord’s hunger was satisfied by obedience. (John iv. 34.) 2) For the glory of God. God has greater glory in restoring than in punishing the wandering sheep ; in saving rather than in destroying.

II. *For the sake of Himself.*—1) Man being His creature, Jesus Christ was a part Creator of the first man ; therefore He loved and cared for him. The care of Jesus for His creature man was expressed in His reproof to Jonah. (Jonah iv. 10, 11.) 2) Man is bound to Him by a chain of love: The Father gave the lost sheep to the Son to rescue (Ps. ii. 8) ; or, as a lost coin to be recovered and made His own ; as a sick one, that He might be to it the loving Physician. (Titus ii. 14.) Hence the Lord’s heavenly glory (Rev. v. 12, 13) is bound up with man.

III. *For our own sake.*—1) Because of our infirmity. (Isa. liii. 6 ; Ps. xlix. 14.) Our blessed Lord is the true David. (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35.) He helps us out of the power of sin and Satan. 2) Because of the danger of our condemnation, He is our true Jonathan. (1 Sam. xx. 41.) He knew our condemnation, therefore. (Jer. xxxi. 3.)

Epilogue.—We ought to help Jesus Christ, meet Him half-way. Remember how Jesus Christ is seeking for us.

SERMON 421.

THE JOY OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“There is joy . . . over one sinner that repenteth.”—*Luke* xv. 10.

Introduction.—The joy ‘of the angels of God’ must be one with the Ever Blessed Trinity, for there is one heart, soul, joy, and glory in heaven. When a sinner is converted, the holy angels rejoice over—1) the fruit of the guardianship; 2) the addition to their ranks; 3) their fellowship of another with whom to praise God. Beyond, far beyond their joy, is the joy of Jesus Christ, who rejoices over a sinner’s conversion, because He sees in it—

I. *The fruit of His Passion.*—The sheep was lost when man by sinning left the pastures of life. He places the sinner upon His shoulders, because ‘He carried our sins.’ Man became an enemy to God by wicked works; He reconciled man to God by the body of His flesh; wandering amidst the mountains and woods of sin and doubt. He sought out. ‘I laboured, I sweat, I gave My head to the thorns, My hands to the nails; My side to the spear. I poured out My Blood to join you to Myself. I left heaven a desert home, whilst sheep were wandering; heaven was a derelict, forsaken by man who was created in order to inhabit it. (Aug.)

II. *The reformation of His own image.*—Man was a piece of money, first lost and then found, on which was stamped the likeness of the king. Ten pieces of money, are the nine orders of angels; man, the tenth, was lost by sin; but Jesus Christ sought it and found it.

III. *The resuscitation of His brother.*—‘This thy brother was dead and is alive again.’ (*Luke* xv. 35.) A ‘better resurrection’ than that of Lazarus. His desire and love for our race as being His Body, His Flesh, His Bones, crowned with victory.

Epilogue.—Shall we bring joy or grief to His loving heart? Let us resolve to further and profit by the work of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 422.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“Then drew near unto Him . . . that repenteth.”—*Luke xv. 1-10.*

Introduction.—We stand at the reading of the Gospel in Church to express outwardly our reverence for its sacred words; other Churches have more ceremonially expressed the same fact. Let us also give due reverence to the Holy Gospel, and hear in it the voice of Jesus Christ, teaching us—

I. *That every office may be abused.*—There is no state or station, however honourable, which the wickedness of man may not render vile, contemptible, and infamous. The office of a ‘publican’ or tax-farmer, once most honourable. In S. Paul’s time (Rom. ii. 24) a reproach of the Jews. (Neh. v. 9.) Every state may lead to an offence. (2 Cor. vi. 3.)

II. *Carefully to hear the Word of God.*—The more so according to our needs. All felt a moral sickness, and came to hear the saving word. Apostles and preachers, ‘salt of the earth,’ as preserving from the corruption of sin. The Scribes and Pharisees were too hardened to hear.

III. *The perverse disposition of the world.*—The world condemns what it ought to admire, and admires what it ought to condemn. (Isa. v. 20.) The world misnames all things; calling avarice, forethought; drunkenness, hilarity; lust, friendship, etc.

IV. *To avoid the sin of detraction.*—This sin—1) Reveals hidden sin; 2) it exaggerates it; 3) it imputes it falsely; 4) it denies any goodness; 5) it puts an evil construction on good deeds.

V. *Who, and how far, to converse with sinners.*—Not the weak and wavering; only those who are fitted to do them good.

VI. *Not to be shamed out of doing good.*—Murmuring of Scribes and Pharisees did not hinder the gracious purpose of Jesus Christ.

VII. *The value of a single soul.*—One lost sheep, one lost piece of money, is worthy of so much thought and care.

SERMON 423.

FUTURE GLORY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“The glory which shall be revealed in us.”—*Rom.* viii. 17.

Introduction.—Glory naturally follows toil, humiliation, and suffering. Some animals having with labour climbed the tree, throw away the nut because the shell is bitter; hence they lose the kernel. So, if we scorn tribulation and suffering, we cannot look for the glory of our reward. (*Heb.* xii. 11.) This future glory flows from five sources.

I. *From the Blessed Trinity.*—(*Isa.* xxxiii. 17.)—1) The Beatific Vision is the face of God in His divinity. This seen, makes earth better than Paradise. (*Ps.* xxvii. 4; lxxx. 19; *John* xvii. 3.) 2) From the humanity of Jesus Christ. ‘The fulness of joy to see man the creator of man.’ (*Bern.*) 3) From a consideration of the hypostatic union.

II. *From Heaven, the place of sweetness.*—From—1) The beauty and brightness of the place. (*Rev.* xxi. 23.) 2) The purity of the place. (*Rev.* xxi. 27.) 3) The size of the place; the whole earth is as a mere point in space, when compared to the empyreal heaven in which the saints will reign for ever with their Lord.

III. *From the society of Heaven.*—From—1) Its multitude. (*Rev.* vii. 9.) 2) Its nobility; amongst whom are the Blessed Virgin, angels, saints, etc. 3) Its love and harmony; the joy of one is the joy and glory of all. The unit of joy and glory is multiplied according to the number of the recipients. (*Isa.* xxxi. 9.) The ‘fire’ and ‘furnace’ is love.

IV. *From the glorification of the body.*—1) From its beauty and brightness. (*Matt.* xiii. 43.) 2) From its freedom. The body will then have the same liberty that the mind possesses now; unconfined by space. 3) From its impassability. (*Rev.* xxi. 4.)

V. *From the sense of a great deliverance.*—1) From the pains of hell; seeing which, the saved will feel filled with thankful joy. 2) From their triumph over all God’s enemies. (*Ps.* lviii. 10.) 3) From the powerlessness of sin any longer to entice, enslave, or affect.

Epilogue.—What is this glory worth? What sacrifices are we making to obtain it?

SERMON 424.

THE TREATMENT OF THE WILL.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”—*Rom. viii. 21.*

Introduction.—Man differs from every other creature, in his possession of a free will and judgment; he alone can judge between right and wrong; and alone can act upon his judgment (*Ecclus. xv. 14-19*); and is alone the subject of reward and punishment. The free will admits of four different kinds of treatment.

I. *It is eternally bound in hell.*—The lost have free wills, but they still are wholly bound. Free will is not an act, or habit, or a quality, accidentally acquired; it is an essential of the soul, and never can be destroyed; but its exercise is hindered; it is as a strong man bound, who cannot free himself. Even good desires can become evil on account of their evil motives. (*Luke xvi. 27, 28.*) The rich man wanted his brethren to evade the justice of God. (*Matt. xxii. 13.*) ‘Outer darkness,’ hell; ‘inner darkness’ is the wicked soul in this present life; ‘teeth’ are the affections; ‘hands’ are deeds. Such a binding is the prophet’s liberty. (*Jer. xxxiv. 17.*) To ‘the sword’ of condemnation; ‘the pestilence,’ of punishment and pains; ‘the famine,’ of poverty, of all hope in hell; ‘removed’ into several spheres of punishment.

II. *It is weakened by sin.*—In those who are able, but not willing to repent; who incline feebly to what is good, but more strongly to what is evil. True of such (*Rom. vi. 20*) having no fruits of holiness; all having gone from them little by little. Seek to regain the other state (*Rom. vi. 18*); and pray (*Ps. vi. 2*); ‘bones’ sustain the body, as the several graces do the soul.

III. *It is truly healed by Divine grace.*—In those who by grace live holily; they have received the promise (*John viii. 36*); for no man from the beginning to the end of the world was freed, but by the liberation of Jesus Christ. (*Num. xxi. 9.*) The mystical brazen serpent is ever in the world. A state of daily increasing strength and progress.

IV. *It is sublimely elevated by glory.*—This is the glorious translation into perfect freedom, and yet perfect obedience; entire sonship with God.

Epilogue.—Take care of the will; guard it with diligence.

SERMON 425.

THE EXERCISE OF MERCY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”—*Luke* vi. 36.

Introduction.—God is powerful, wise, rich, as well as merciful; yet we are not told to imitate Him in any attribute save that of mercy. He is not called the Father of wisdom, etc., but ‘the Father of mercy.’ (2 Cor. i. 3.) Three forms of mercy mentioned in the Gospel for the day.

I. *Mercy in judging others.*—1) Even in things manifest, in openly wicked words and deeds we are bound to put the best and not the worst construction upon them; to make allowance for circumstances; to feel tenderly, as knowing our own infirmities. 2) In things doubtful to pronounce no positive condemnation, although we may have very strong suspicions. (1 Cor. iv. 5.) Give the suspected the full benefit of the doubt, and oftentimes it will be cleared up satisfactorily. 3) In hidden things, it is most dangerous, nay, criminal to judge others. More so even to judge ourselves. (1 Cor. iv. 3.) Dangerous to judge the unknown hearts of others, in which there lies hidden so vast a depth either of grace or sin. Let all judgment be left in God’s hands.

II. *Mercy in forgiving others.*—Not merely in overlooking offences, but in loving the offender. (Matt. v. 44.) The wicked persecute the holy—1) by hatred in their hearts; to which they must oppose love, and try to turn them over to God; 2) by cutting and reproachful words; to which they must oppose prayer for their conversion; 3) by injurious deeds; to which they give every conceivable office of love and kindness.

III. *Mercy in relieving the wants of others.*—This is done from a feeling of mercy and compassion. 1) Alms are to be given and not sold for—a) any hope of future return; b) or for the sake of praise; c) or because of importunity. 2) Alms are to be given in life, not left till after death. ‘The gifts which are dying gifts are not gifts. 3) They bring their reward. (Luke xvi. 9.) The temporal gift brings with it a temporal blessing. (Isa. lviii. 7, 8.)

Epilogue.—It is all gain to show mercy and loving kindness.

SERMON 426.

JUDGING OTHERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Judge not and ye shall not be judged; condemn not and ye shall not be condemned.”—*Luke vi. 37.*

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord was most severe against this too common, but most dangerous, sin; a sin which produces such bitter fruits; of which we may mention some.

I. *Presumption.*—No one would venture to judge others unless he thought them both inferior and worse than himself. An old man was asked to explain (Titus i. 1-5) ‘Unto the pure,’ etc. He who understands these words feels himself to be inferior to all others, was the answer. How can I feel this when I see some men who are homicides? They did this crime once; you slay your own soul, and others in your heart, every hour of your life. Man can only be just or pure when his mind condemns his own sins.

II. *Precipitation.*—Such judgment is generally made in haste before the truth has been fully known or examined. We hastily judge of—1) Present apparent good or evil like the Pharisees of old. (Matt. xii. 7.) 2) Of some past action to which we affix an intention of our own. (James ii. 4.) 3) The future, when we deliver some one over to final retribution (1 Cor. iv. 5), condemning him in our hearts to eternal death.

III. *Usurpation.*—Judgment of others is a usurpation of the authority which is committed to our Blessed Lord alone. (Rom. xiv. 4.) We note in this question—1) The inferiority of the rash judge, ‘Who!’ etc. 2) His rapacity, ‘another man’s.’ (Exod. ii. 14.) 3) The authority of the true judge to his own master. (1 Cor. iv. 5.)

IV. *Delusion.*—Judging another whilst under self-condemnation (Rom. ii. 1, 21) is a snare of Satan.

Epilogue.—Let us learn to judge ourselves, and leave others in God’s hands.

SERMON 427.

THE RECIPIENTS OF MERCY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”—*Luke* vi. 36.

Introduction.—Although God is now merciful to all men, yet His final mercy will be limited to those only who are worthy of His favours; to whom now God especially delights to show mercy; and these may be divided into four classes.

I. *They who fear God.*—(*Ps.* ciii. 13, 14.)—If a man confesses his fault to another, and offers willingly to submit to any punishment, he generally meets with forgiveness; the injured pardons the injurer. David had grievously sinned against God, yet when his heart ‘smote him,’ and he elected to ‘fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great,’ the Lord stayed the hand of His angel. (2 Sam. xxiv. 10, 14, 16.) Where humility begins, direct punishment ends. No escape from God (*Ps.* cxxxix. 8-13); all we can do is to cast ourselves upon His mercy.

II. *They who follow holiness.*—A man wishing to build a fair and stately mansion, chooses good artificers, and so procures a substantial building; so too by holiness we build a good house, in which the soul may eternally rejoice; and Jesus Christ is the chief artificer of this house; and although it is built by many graces, mercy holds the second place. (*Titus* iii. 5.) As Solomon sent servants to all lands to gain material for building the Temple (1 Kings v. 14), so our Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly Solomon, forms His spiritual temple out of the gifts and graces of the elect.

III. *They who show mercy.*—(*Matt.* v. 17.)—Seven corporal works of mercy; to help one’s neighbour; to give drink to the thirsty, and food to the hungry; to clothe the naked; and to bury the dead; visit sick; liberate captives. The seven stars of (*Rev.* i. 16) are the seven rewards of mercy—1) forgetfulness of trouble; 2) drinking of the wine of eternity; 3) abundance of spiritual food; 4) refulgent clothing; 5) life and immortality; 6) health of body; 7) freedom from damnation.

IV. *They who forgive wrongs.*—Such follow the seven intrinsic or spiritual works of mercy—1) to forgive; 2) to correct in love; 3) to pray; 4) to instruct; 5) to console; 6) to compassionate; 7) to confirm.

Epilogue.—Follow mercy so rich in reward.

SERMON 428.

ALMSGIVING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“Give, and it shall be given unto you.”—*Luke vi. 38.*

Introduction.—They who deny relief to the suffering, deny it to Jesus Christ; as do those also, who unduly heap up to themselves those riches which God intended for the common benefit of all. As one obstructing the course of water, or building out another's light, so is he who stores up, whilst others want. Hence, ‘Give’—

I. *Promptly.*—(Prov. iii. 27, 28.)—It is a part of true kindness to give at once what is asked for. ‘He gives double who gives quickly.’ 1) It shows a ready mind in the giver. (2 Cor. ix. 7.) 2) It helps at the special crisis of need.

II. *Liberally.*—(Luke xix. 8.)—Zacchæus. ‘The half of my goods;’ not to consider how little, but how much you can give; not as an imposition to be recoiled from, but as a delight to be indulged in.

III. *Beneficially.*—‘My goods,’ said Zacchæus, not my crumbs, my waste; the refuse of my extravagance. The best of what I have. I give that which is the most prized, and is the choicest of my possessions.

IV. *Advisedly.*—Not without due judgment and discrimination; but give to—1) The honour of God; that He may be blessed and praised for your gift. 2) The benefit of the recipient; not to confirm him in vice, idleness, or extravagance; but to promote frugality, and to inspire hope. 3) For real profit and advantage; not for ostentation or vainglory. (Matt. vi. 2.)

V. *Self-sacrificedly.*—Zacchæus said, ‘my goods,’ his own special possessions; not dispensing other men's riches; not offering to the Lord—1) that which costs us nothing; 2) that which is unlawfully or ill gotten. The greater the sacrifice in giving, the more the pleasure of the reward will be.

Epilogue.—Either small or no merit in bequests; for we cannot take our riches away with us when we die. The mammon of unrighteousness is of use to us only in this life. Legacies and bequests indicate no real generosity of soul.

SERMON 429.

THE WORK OF MERCY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father in Heaven is also merciful.”—
Luke vi. 36.

Introduction.—Mercy makes us like God, and it impresses upon our souls certain marks of His high nature. The merciless are excluded from the number of the children of God. That we may know more perfectly that which we ought to imitate, we will consider three of the effects of mercy upon sinners. Mercy leads to—

I. *Liberality of communication.*—The great mercy of God is shown in His temporal blessings even to sinners. ‘The sinner is unworthy of the bread which he eats,’ yet God often gives him not merely necessities, but abundance. God is our example. (Matt. v. 44.) ‘If such use these blessings ill, a fearful punishment awaits them.’ (Luke xvi. 25.) God also wills to draw sinners to repentance, by giving them such a good and moving cause for gratitude to Him. If gratitude be turned to ingratitude, true. (Rom. ii. 5.) ‘The quality of mercy is not strained,’ etc. We should measure our mercy rather by the needs than by the worthiness of its object.

II. *Longsuffering of expectation.*—(Isa. xxx. 18.)—Every wilful sinner deserves at the moment of his sin to be deprived of all blessings, spiritual, bodily, and temporal; and to be sent whilst living into hell. God bears with us, days, and months, and years, not because sin displeases Him not; or He will not punish it; or He does not see it; or is impotent to avenge it. In the sweetness of His mercy He passes by it; giving time for repentance. (2 Peter iii. 9.) No longsuffering of expectation in the cases of Lucifer (Isa. xiv. 12) and Adam. (Gen. iii. 22, 24.) Now God passes sin by. He waits, He endures, ten, twenty, or thirty years, even to old age. (Ezek. xviii. 32.) The shadow of the Cross rests upon the sinner during his probation of mercy.

III. *Benignity of recall.*—(Matt. ix. 13.)—The Jews were called many times; and for forty-two years after the Ascension; before the sword came. If a deaf ear be turned, a day of judgment follows.

Epilogue.—We must bear the sign of our King, Jesus Christ (Gal. v. 10); which is a sign of mercy towards us.

SERMON 430.

RASH JUDGMENT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.”—*Luke vi. 37.*

Introduction.—We should ever be on our guard against yielding to the temptation of judging others. We are all so prompt and forward to fall into this sin. Of rash judgment we note—

I. *It is a sin.*—1) Against our own moral nature. We injure ourselves when we judge others, being weakened in love and strengthened in those faculties which most need repression, suspicion, and careful watching. 2) Against our neighbour. We often do him grievous wrong. *a)* We do not know all the circumstances of the case. *b)* We cannot fathom his motives; it is as if we should pass a judgment upon an unfinished work of art. 3) Against God, taking the judgment out of His hands. (Micah iii. 8.) So Miriam sinned against God and Moses. (Num. xii. 1.) So Michael against God and David. (2 Sam. vi. 20.) Hanun against God and David. (2 Sam. x. 4.)

II. *The origin of this sin.*—1) Hatred and envy. So the Scribes and Pharisees judged Jesus Christ and S. John Baptist. (Matt. xi. 18, 19.) So Cain judged Abel; Saul, David. 2) It is an evil heart which thinks others to be as evil as itself. The thief is suspicious of another's honesty. Joseph's brethren judged him by themselves. We credit others with no higher motives than our own, measuring them by our own standard. 3) Pride, which fancies itself to be above those upon whom judgment is passed. Hence the judgment of the Pharisee upon the Publican. (Luke xviii. 11.)

III. *The remedy against it.*—So look at our sins and imperfections. (John viii. 7, 9.) One asked to judge, said, I do not yet know myself, and how can I see the defects of my brother. Another filled a sack with sand, saying, my own sins I can hardly bear, much less judge others.

Epilogue.—Be very careful of judging others.

SERMON 431.

FOUR MEASURES OF LOVE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“Good measure, pressed down and shaken together, shall men give into your bosom.”—*Luke* vi. 38.

Introduction.—The ‘measure’ is the loving power of the mind, that is, of the will, by which are measured all the works, words, life, and eternal blessedness of man. Our measure of love here will regulate the measure of our eternal blessedness hereafter. The measurer who measures out this measure is the illuminated understanding of man. These measures are—

I. *Good measure—Practical Love.*—Holy resolution; a turning to God with resolutions of amendment of life founded upon repentance. Living in holiness and in love to God and man. A life of holy obedience. A very valuable, but still the weakest form of love to God; being the beginning of love.

II. *Pressed down—Contemplative Love.*—Love passes into an inward exercise, that of diligently seeking God in the deepest recesses of the soul; for in that depth there lies hidden the Kingdom of God. Men pass from the outward exercises of prayer—weeping, and fasting, all of which belong to good measure—to that pure inward working which forms the divine and blessed life; that abstraction and meditation which awakens a true devotedness, and a fervent desire to humbly sink down into the abyss of God. These inward exercises of abstraction and meditation make the soul, by love, very quick to feel the touch of God. This is progressive love.

III. *Shaken together—Attractive Love.*—An overflowing love which draws all things to itself; all the good in the world it draws into its own vessel. By love, the soul draws to itself all good deeds, customs, and services, both in heaven and on earth, which are the fruits of grace; it swallows up all the goodness of angels and saints in heaven, and all the suffering, pain, and goodness that is to be found in heaven and earth.

IV. *Running over—Reflective Love.*—God touches the brimming vessel of the soul with His finger, and without either channel or means it pours itself back into Him its source. Will, knowledge, and love are all swallowed up and lost in God.

Epilogue.—This love is the source of present holiness and future glory.

SERMON 432.**THE MERCY OF GOD.**—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”—*Luke* vi. 36.

Introduction.—Mercy is a great attribute of God. He is merciful towards all. (*Matt.* v. 45; *Ps.* cxlv. 9.) Even in punishing, God remembers mercy. (*Ps.* ciii. 10.) For (*James* ii. 13) God places the soul before the body, and often shows His mercy to the soul at the expense of the body by chastening it. (*Heb.* xii. 6-11.) Hence (*Prov.* xi. 17). We note the mercy of God as exercised in—

I. *Warning.*—God has compassion on the unworthy, on those who have turned away from Himself, the chief good. No one is left to go on alone to utter and hopeless destruction, but He mercifully warns the wanderers of their danger. (*Isa.* xxx. 21): ‘word behind,’ mercy overtaking the sinner.

II. *Waiting.*—(*Isa.* xxx. 18.)—This waiting of God for the repentance of the sinner, the wicked are ignorant of. (*Rom.* ii. 4.) How long has God waited for thy soul; earnestly, lovingly, pleadingly?

III. *Sustaining.*—(*Ps.* cxxxvi. 25; cxlvii. 9.)—Even sinners in all the blessings of His providence; and feeding with His spiritual food more wonderfully and completely than He fills them with bodily meat. (*John* i. 16.)

IV. *Defending.*—(*Ps.* xlii. 2; xciv. 22; xci. 2, 11.)—From —1) Satan; 2) danger; 3) temptation. (*Ps.* cxxi. 5.) No ill can overcome those whom, in His mercy, God is protecting.

V. *Exalting.*—(*Ps.* cxiii. 7, 8.)—Lifting up those so deeply fallen in the abyss of sin that they could not arise without His wonderful interposition to repentance and amendment of life.

Epilogue.—Love, honour, and obey such a merciful God and Father, Whose mercy is alone bounded by our sin, in firmity, and need.

SERMON 433.

HYPOCRISY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye.”—*Luke* vi. 42.

Introduction.—Hypocrisy is a pretence by which a man feigns himself to be righteous, or more righteous than he really is; it is a lie in act, involving a deadly sin, if the end and intention of the pretender is against charity. Many pretend to holiness for the sake of some post or gain. Notable hypocrites in Holy Scripture are: ‘Cain who talked with Abel.’ (*Gen.* iv. 8.) Joab: ‘Art thou in health, my brother.’ (2 *Sam.* xx. 9.) Judas: ‘Hail, Master.’ (*Matt.* xxvi. 49.) As opposed to this loathsome vice, note Nathanael, or Bartholomew,’ (*John* i. 47), ‘in whom is no guile.’ The Lord gave eight beatitudes; He also gave eight sentences against hypocrites (*Matt.* xxiii. 13-34), who commit eight offences. For they—

I. *Close the Kingdom of Heaven.*—1) By their doctrine; 2) by their example; destroying the faith of Jesus Christ, Who is the door.

II. *Make gain of spiritual things.*—Using holy offices as a pretence to extract money, hospitality, and the like from their victims.

III. *Seduce others by their example.*—Proselytize to their own unreal way of thinking, speaking, and acting; so bringing true religion into contempt.

IV. *Are careful for forms only.*—More studious of human than of divine precepts; more attentive to outward prayer than to inward purity of heart.

V. *Cleanse the outward man alone.*—Dress, clothing, manners, accomplishments, are substituted for a regenerate heart.

VI. *Shine before men, and not before God.*—Whited sepulchres; all things are for show.

VII. *Pretend to a false veneration.*—Build up the sepulchres of the holy ones they really despise.

VIII. *Draw unreal distinctions.*—As between the temple and the altar.

SERMON 434.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“Be ye therefore merciful . . . in thy brother’s eye.”—*Luke vi. 36-43.*

Introduction.—Likeness to God ought to be our highest end and aim. As the Son is like the Father, so ought we to seek to become like God. As sculptors and painters seek to make their statues and portraits like the originals, so should we try to become more and more like God—Whose image we bear—in order that His likeness, which was lost by sin, may be restored to us by grace. That we may become thus Godlike, let us listen to the Lord, Who in this Gospel is teaching us—

I. *Not to judge others.*—‘Judge not.’ No opinion, whether good or bad, is to be formed of the actions of others. Judicially in civil and criminal cases the Judge is to judge his fellow. (Ps. lviii. 1; John vii. 24; 1 Tim. v. 20.) Not in common life, or upon every occasion, are we to be prying into the actions or motives of others.

II. *Not to condemn others.*—‘Condemn not.’ Not denying the lawfulness of passing a just sentence upon the guilty; but we are not to condemn one another, as the Scribes did the disciples of Jesus Christ, for breaking the law. (Matt. xii. 2). If we are not to judge of others in our hearts, much less are we to pass a sentence of condemnation against them by our mouths.

III. *To forgive others.*—‘Forgive.’ To retain no malice in our hearts against those who may have injured us. (Matt. vi. 14, 15; Eph. iv. 32; Coloss. iii. 13).

IV. *To practise almsgiving.*—‘Give and it shall be given.’ (Matt. xxv. 35-43.) So our Lord describes the reward which follows from helping others.

V. *To look at ourselves.*—We must regard ourselves rather than others, and see whether we are fit, prudent, and wise, ere we attempt to direct or to guide others.

SERMON 435.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.—(*Epistle*,
Ser. I.)

“He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”—1 *Peter* iii. 10.

Introduction.—Speech, man’s special gift and prerogative, is often the cause of his fall. Many who would not sin in act, without any fear or thought, sin in words. This causes them infinite loss; for (James iii. 2; Prov. xxviii. 28) applies to the tongue chiefly if not altogether; and also (Prov. x. 19.) The unbridled tongue injures the soul in three ways.

I. *It deprives it of due guardianship.*—(Prov. xiii. 3.)—The soul is like a camp or citadel; it is guarded all round, and especially at the gates; if these be left open all other fortifications are useless. So unless the mouth be guarded, all other guards are posted in vain; the camp of the soul is opened to the enemy at will.

II. *It deprives it of Divine grace.*—The soul is a vessel which God fills with His grace; but let it be ever so well closed, and only a small orifice left in it, the wine will be lost. So through the opening of indiscretion of speech, the grace of God is frequently lost; a word is a sword in itself, a weapon very light, but it wounds heavily, and lets out the life-blood; so is speech the aptest instrument for emptying the heart of God’s grace. The communication of wickedness consists in the full emptying of the soul.

III. *It seduces it from the right path.*—Evil speech acting upon the soul, seduces it from its allegiance to the Lord. It fills, like the speech of Satan did the heart of Eve, the soul with doubt and disobedience.

Epilogue.—It is so easy to sin with the tongue; therefore this form of sin needs so much the more to be guarded against.

SERMON 436.

THE INHERITORS OF THE BLESSING.—(*Epistle*.
Ser. II.)

“Ye should inherit a blessing.”—1 *Peter* iii. 9.

Introduction.—The ‘blessing’ stands for the heavenly glory which God prepares for us; as by a word God made the light and all created things. (*Ps.* xxxiii. 9.) The gift of glory, or the operation of God in giving glory, is a ‘blessing.’ (*Matt.* xxv. 34.) Who can receive this blessing of everlasting life and glory? (*Ps.* xxiv. 4, 5.)

I. *Little children who have never sinned.*—The pure in heart, in speech, and in deed; it is true of such. (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 11.) Pure from actual sin, the infant soul, the ‘island of the innocent’ (*Job* xxii. 30), is brought to the gate of Paradise by ‘pureness of hands,’ which is opened to it since all original sin has been cancelled in baptism. (*John* iii. 5.) Such are delivered from—1) ignorance: ‘they know as they are known.’ 2) Smallness: are then full grown. 3) Weakness: are strong as giants.

II. *Penitent sinners.*—Repentance, contrition, resolution of amendment, etc., make a second baptism of cleansing. Contrition of heart, is the root of penitence. From it proceeds. (*Matt.* xv. 19.) The heart is the fountain of thought and action. (*Prov.* iv. 23.) When the heart is right, all its powers, and all the senses of the body, are alike disciplined. Hence the beatitude. (*Matt.* v. 8.)

III. *The faithful who are obedient.*—Such have not in vain received their souls or lives who realize (2 *Cor.* vi. 2) the time accepted is ‘this world;’ they have learned the lesson to give up this world for the next, and have ever remembered that. (*John* xii. 25.) Mindful, too, of their work and purpose in this world, they strive lawfully and honourably for the crown of glory. Such have not ‘lifted up their souls unto vanity.’ (*Ps.* xxiv. 4.)

IV. *Those who are submissive to the will of God.*—Who murmur not at any form of sorrow or suffering (*Heb.* x. 26); who bear all things for the sake of Jesus Christ; following Him in all suffering, trusting to His Word. (*Matt.* xix. 28.)

Epilogue.—Count all loss to be gain, to secure the blessing.

SERMON 437.

PREACHERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Master, we have toiled all night and have taken nothing.”—*Luke* v. 6.

Introduction.—The first preachers were called fishermen, because with one drag of the net, *i.e.*, with one sermon, they drew to Jesus Christ a multitude of souls. The present preachers are called ‘hunters,’ because with much toil, and fatigue, and labour, they can hardly capture one single soul. (Jer. xvi. 16.) The angels, the last preachers, are reapers or grape-gatherers (Rev. xiv. 18, 19); with the sickle of Divine eloquence they shall gather the ripe grapes into the garner of the Lord, and the unripe grapes into the winepress of His wrath. Four reasons why the hunters, or the present preachers, catch so few souls.

I. *They fish in the night of ignorance.*—They have little light, either of Divine knowledge or of grace. They are in the darkness of ignorance themselves: ‘blind leaders of the blind.’ (1 Tim. i. 7.) Preachers require the twofold light of knowledge and of grace to illumine their souls.

II. *They fish with broken nets.*—(Matt. iv. 21.)—They deny in act that which they preach in word. Jesus Christ preached by example as much as by precept. An inconsistent life makes many a rent in the net of the preacher.

III. *They fish in shallow water.*—‘Launch out into the deep.’ Instead of teaching things of the letter rather than of the spirit; dealing with shadows rather than with substances. They treat of earthly rather than of heavenly things. Of these. (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

IV. *They fish in wrong places.*—On the left, and not on the right, side of the ship. (John xxi. 5.) Appealing to the lower instead of the higher considerations of the Gospel; setting the left hand opinions of this world before the right hand motives of God and His kingdom.

Epilogue.—1) Imitate, ye preachers, the preaching of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. 2) Strive to be followers of Jesus Christ in His life.

SERMON 438.

THE ABYSS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)“Launch out into the deep.”—*Luke* v. 4.

Introduction.—The ship mentioned in this Gospel signifies, amongst other things, the inward mind and intention of man, which is ever agitated by the winds of prosperity and adversity, borne upon the dangerous and stormy sea of this world's life. The dangers of this sea few rightly estimate; and yet if we would escape being submerged and perishing in this horrible sea, we must lift our souls above all mortal creatures; above all the night of worldly toil, during which we take nothing, and we must let down the net of memory and thought into the abyss of God. The great and manifold gain which He gives exceeds the strength of human nature to bear; it breaks under it; ‘their net brake;’ but after the resurrection this did not happen. (*John* xxi. 11.) We let down our net of the soul into the abyss of God—

I. *By holy meditation.*—This excites, moves, and allures to holy devotion. By this means the most holy life of Jesus Christ is brought home to us, so that His love may penetrate all our senses with such a joy and gladness, that it cannot be hid. This is the first launch.

II. *By entire resignation to His Will.*—Purged and enlightened within and without by meditation and resignation, we become like Jesus Christ. Adversities, temptations, miseries, and calamities, press sorely upon the soul; but still God makes it superior to them. They rush in importunately, but they are not able to destroy the inward peace. (*Rom.* viii. 38-39.)

III. *By entire emersion in God.*—This brings peace. (*Ps.* xxxiv. 14; *Phil.* iv. 7.) To him who is outwardly cleansed and enlightened, these inward things are revealed and uncovered. Outward things are almost as nothing; heaven and earth and creation are consecrated anew; since such are themselves a kind of heaven of God, Who rests in them. (*Ps.* lxxxv. 8; *Eph.* iii. 17, 18.) Then is fulfilled (*Ps.* xlii. 7). The created calling the uncreated deep within.

Epilogue.—God lives and informs Himself in those who are one with Him.

SERMON 439.

UNPROFITABLE HEARERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing.”—*Luke* v. 5.

Introduction.—The first preachers were fishermen, who cast the net of the Gospel into the troubled waters of this world’s sea; and so ‘fishers of men’ have God’s ministers been called from our Lord’s day to our own. We are certainly unsuccessful fishermen when we are compared with the Apostles. The Word of God seems to obtain but small hold upon four classes of hearers.

I. *The unimpressive.*—Some are very slippery fishes, which, like eels, slide through the net of the Gospel. Nothing has any hold upon their souls; they throw off all deep feeling and earnest emotion. Taken in your hand, arrested in an argument from which they cannot escape, they glide away from you. Of such (*Job* xxi. 13). They are amenable to neither love nor fear, nor conviction. They slip through the difficulties, duties, cares of life, to slide at last down to hell.

II. *The cunning.*—They avoid, by a diabolical cunning, the net of the Gospel. They are too wise for the simplicity of Jesus Christ. They will not be caught in the net of persuasion, of conviction, or of grace; but at death they are caught by God, who delivers over to Satan, who in his turn delivers them into hell and eternal torment. Such are ever caught in snares of sin. (*Matt.* v. 25.) ‘Adversary,’ Divine Word; ‘the Judge,’ Jesus Christ; the officer, the devil; ‘prison,’ hell fire.

III. *The small or the too humble.*—They slip through the meshes of the net; they fear to follow the word out to its consequences in the soul. Three classes are daunted by no obstacles. 1) The soldier by fear of death. (2 *Tim.* ii. 3.) 2) The merchant by fear of losses. (*Luke* xix. 1.) 3) The husbandman. (*Eccles.* xi. 4.) None are too humble for God’s grace.

IV. *The great or the too proud.*—They break the net, they despise the law of God. (*Jer.* v. 5.) Jesus Christ only conversed with one doctor, Gamaliel; one ruler, Nicodemus; one rich man, Zacchæus. (1 *Cor.* i. 26.)

Epilogue.—Receive with meekness the engrafted word. (*James* i. 21.)

SERMON 440.

THE SAD COMPLAINT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing.”—*Luke* v. 5.

Introduction.—The conduct of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who, acting with his librarian Demetrius Phalerius, and his friend Aristæus, caused the Jewish Scriptures to be translated into Greek (*Joseph. Antiq.* xii. c. 2), is full of instruction. He liberated 120,000 Jewish captives, giving 120 drachms for every slave; and he greatly honoured and rewarded the 72 translators. When Demetrius read the finished work to him, he was ‘delighted with hearing the laws read;’ he asked ‘how it came to pass, that after this legislation was so wonderful, no one either of the poets or the historians had made mention of it; ‘he adored’ the books, ‘and gave order that great care should be taken of them.’ The earnestness of a heathen king like Ptolemy puts Christians to shame who so carelessly receive the Gospel. Many generations of preachers have taken up S. Peter’s sad complaint. The causes why it ever sounded are—

I. *Craftiness.*—Few caught, for the many are so cunning they perceive the net of the Gospel, and they instantly swim away like fishes, or flee as the prey before the hunter. Of whom. (*Isa.* xxxi. 21; *Ezek.* iii. 7.) Habitual sin hardens the heart against the words of life. (*Matt.* iv. 4; *John* vi. 63.) Of the Gospel: ‘This is an hard saying.’

II. *Stiffneckedness.*—The many are sustained by riches; they labour under a most dangerous malady, which is commonly called ‘*noli me tangere*.’ The rich lack truth, though they have all else. (*Senec.*) (*Gal.* iv. 16) applies to the rich. The prosperous feel towards Gospel truth as Ahab did (*1 Kings* xxii. 8) towards prophetic truth.

III. *Inconstancy.*—The many, like eels, glide away, wounded to repentance; they return to pleasure. The Word has no effect upon their lives. As the lion does not eat grass, these fleshly minds cannot feed upon spiritual food. Of such (*Ezek.* xxxiii. 31, 32). The condemnation of them will be (*Isa.* xxviii. 13).

IV. *Slothfulness.*—Slothfulness is the mother of faint-heartedness. Such, like little fishes, by their smallness slip through the Gospel net, giving way under trouble.

Epilogue.—Avoid the fearful reproach of (*Titus* i. 16).

SERMON 441.

READY HEARERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“The people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God.”—*Luke* v. 1.

Introduction.—The token of a good husbandman is a fruitful harvest; of a good preacher, a large congregation. (S. Chrysos.) Our Blessed Lord was a most popular preacher: ‘the people pressed upon Him;’ drawn towards Him by—
1) His gracious words; 2) His loving mien and countenance; 3) His miraculous power. The hearers in to-day’s Gospel are to be commended for—

I. *They heard with avidity.*—‘They pressed upon Him:’ as the destitute would go to the giver of alms; as the hungry to him whose hands are filled with bread. There was ‘a famine of hearing the word of the Lord.’ (Amos viii. 11.) Such hunger is a sign of a sound mind, just as bodily hunger is of a state of health. This was in the first age; in the second age there will be a repletion. (Isa. xi. 9.) This satiety in earthly things leads to loathing, which is a sign of dearth. (Ps. cvii. 18. ‘All manner of food;’ for ‘the word of God’ satisfies and fills all the hungry. We must hear with eagerness.

II. *They heard with obedience.*—A command to S. Peter—
1) ‘Thrust out a little from the land,’ for the people’s sake.
2) ‘Launch into deep,’ and ‘let down nets’ for himself. He might have pleaded—1) fatigue: toiled all night; 2) difficulty of the task: fishing in deep water; 3) the uselessness of request: ‘taken nothing.’ Useless to hear and not to obey. (Luke xi. 28.)

III. *They heard with modesty.*—Jesus Christ preached, ‘Thrust out a little from the land.’ Not bound like the covetous to earth; not removed from it, as is the perfect man; but weaned from an inordinate love of earthly things. This action is a commentary upon (1 Cor. vii. 31.)

IV. *They heard with reverence.*—‘When He had left speaking.’ The multitudes did not interrupt His discourse. Preaching is to be heard with reverence; it is—1) the medicine; 2) the jewels; 3) the remains of Jesus Christ; and so demands care in use, jealousy in preservation, and veneration in reception.

Epilogue.—Take heed how ye hear.

SERMON 442.

THE NIGHT OF SIN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“We have toiled all night.”—*Luke* v. 5.

Introduction.—To the sinner this world is a place of darkness; he is shut out from the light of divine grace, and no ray of the light of heaven can ever reach him while he continues in sin; his whole life is one walking on ‘still in darkness.’ This godless life resembles the night, since it is—

I. *Wandering.*—Men wander in the night, as sinners do who are destitute of the light of grace. (*Wisd.* v. 6.) The ignorant will be fully enlightened after death. The instability of the world often causes man to fall without thought, and the soul is taken and destroyed. (*Judges* xix. 27.) The sinner walks in the darkness of his sins with a fair concubine, his soul; and when the night of death comes, the soul is given over to eternal death. For (*Matt.* xxiv. 27; xxv. 6.)

II. *Fearful.*—Night is a time of terror, in which men see horrible things, and dream horrible dreams. As Daniel’s vision of the four beasts (*Dan.* vii. 2-9), which represent pride, covetousness, sensuality, and deadly sin, with its seven horns of sin. Job’s vision. (*Job* iv. 15.) Visions of doubt and darkness at times torment the sinner’s mind.

III. *Sorrowful.*—Wakeful in the night, we gain nothing but an increase of pain, like those who are sick. As the body is injured by bruises, so and more is the soul wounded by sins. The soul feeling its grief at times unbearable, cries out. (*Ps.* vi. 2.)

IV. *Fruitless.*—‘Have taken nothing.’ As long as a man remains in deadly sin—1) he spoils all his actions; 2) consumes his time in vanity; 3) and basely neglects the gifts of grace. Hence (*John* ix. 4; *Dan.* vii. 9-11.) This is a vision of judgment; the ‘night when no man can work;’ a time when all past work will be judged by the condition of the worker.

Epilogue.—Seek to walk in the day, and in the light. (1 *John* i. 7.)

SERMON 443.

PREACHERS AND HEARERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“The people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God.”—*Luke* v. 1.

Introduction.—An inconvenient time, a common place, subject to the sun’s heat, to wind, to the danger of being pushed into the sea; an undignified manner of preaching, ‘from a ship;’ all this might have been urged as an excuse against listening to the Lord’s discourse. But the people loved and longed to hear Him; time, place, and trouble were as nothing to them. We are infrequent or unprofitable hearers, for we take exceptions—

I. *Against the preacher.*—1) He is too bitter in reproof. We dislike him as Ahab disliked Micaiah. (1 Kings xxii. 8.) A plain sermon is as the sharp knife of the surgeon; as hot water for cleansing a wound. The devil is a most bland and pleasant preacher, and he follows (Ezek. xiii. 10). The axe must be well plied if the trees of sin are to be cut down. (2 Kings vi. 4, 5.) The Sybarites would allow no artificer of noisy arts to dwell in their city, lest their sleep should be disturbed. (Athen. xii. 15.) 2) He does not practise what he preaches. a) This is impossible, as his duty is set before men an ideal holiness which can be only realized in heaven. b) He does not speak his own words, nor in his own name. c) (Matt. xxiii. 5) teaching of Scribes and Pharisees to be listened to. d) The shadow of S. Peter (Acts v. 15) represents preachers having his power but not his holy life. The apron of S. Paul (Acts xix. 12); those who are covered before, true in their words, but imperfect behind, in their deeds.

II. *Against the sermon.*—1) It is too long. Note the length of the Sermon on the Mount, which occupies three whole chapters. S. Paul at Troas preached till the middle of night. (Acts xx. 7.) 2) It contains nothing new. Like the old Athenians. (Acts xvii. 21.) The honest preacher is obliged to keep to old paths. (Jer. vi. 15.) Even great oratorical culture is to be avoided. (1 Cor. ii. 4.) 3) The same things are often repeated ‘ad nauseam,’ but this repetition leads to a clear impression on the mind of the hearer, and to a well digested expression on the part of the speaker.

III. *On our own account.*—1) We know enough without being taught more. Daniel explained Belshazzar’s writing. Nathan convicted David. Preaching as a shower upon soul. (Deut. xxxii. 2; Isa. lv. 10, 11.) 2) We cannot remember what we hear. 3) No convenient seat. Water cleanse vessel, even when poured out.

Epilogue.—Make no vain excuses.

SERMON 444.

THE DEEP OF PERFECTION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“Launch out into the deep.”—*Luke v. 4.*

Introduction.—Three grades of hearers. 1) ‘Those on the shore,’ surrounded by a crowd; the ordinary unaspiring life of unthinking minds. 2) ‘A little from the land;’ those who are a little advanced, yet still weak and halting. 3) ‘Into the deep;’ those gaining perfection. As our Blessed Lord took His disciples with Him, so will He take all of us: He wills all of us to tend to perfection. (*Matt. v. 48; James i. 4.*) All noble souls tend to perfection. We are bidden to ‘launch out into the deep’ of perfection by—

I. *Nature itself.*—In nature all things tend by time and growth to perfection, which is limited, whilst the soul has no limit to its growth and perfection. Our whole life is a course to the goal, and the end of it is death. (*1 Chron. xxix. 15.*) As the shadow follows the cloud, so does the course of this life the other blessed life: it admits of no delay, it is ever in motion, seeking a higher and a higher perfection. Unless we advance, we are falling away from perfection.

II. *God the Father.*—The father desires all His sons to be like himself. (*Lev. xx. 7.*) So to Abraham in the old and rude state of the law (*Gen. xvii. 1*), how much rather to Christians. (*1 John iii. 2.*)

III. *God the Son.*—(*Matt. v. 48.*)—Therefore He redeemed us with so great a ransom. (*Eph. y. 25, 26.*) Hence His great care for His vineyard. (*Isa. v. 2, 7.*) Hiram liberally supplied Solomon with materials for building the temple, and he was displeased with the poor cities given him in exchange. (*1 Kings ix. 11-14.*) What return has Jesus Christ for His thirty-three years of labour in building the spiritual temple, unless we aim at perfection.

IV. *Our ancestors in the faith.*—The great cloud of witnesses. (*Heb. xii. 1.*) Hence the Lord’s accusation. (*John viii. 39.*)

V. *Ourselves from others.*—Demanding the highest exercises of genius, art, and skill in surgeons, painters, and musicians.

Epilogue.—Ever press onwards to the unattained.

SERMON 445.

THE VESSEL OF THE CHURCH.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IX.)

“He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s.”—*Luke v. 3.*

Introduction.—If two ships were going to a far country—one all that could be desired, and the other utterly faulty and imperfect—would a sensible man choose to travel in the bad ship and neglect the good? The ship of Simon is the ship of the Church; the other is the ship of the various sects and denominations of the present day. The good ship of the Church is—

I. *An old ship.*—Well tried; for it has stood many a storm, and is supported by many a promise. (Matt. xxviii. 20; xvi. 18; Luke xxii. 32.) Sectarian and denominational ships lack—1) Age: at the best not above two or three hundred years old. Ask, with Tertullian, ‘Who are you? Where do you come from? What do you profess? Where have you been hidden this long time, that we have never heard of you before?’ 2) Succession: ‘I spring from Wesley;’ ‘I from Calvin.’ Some spring from themselves. 3) Mission. Who sent you? (Rom. x. 15.) Are you not presumptuous? (Heb. v. 4.)

II. *A well-disciplined ship.*—Hence (Matt. vii. 20). Discipline is essential to right working. The new ship lacks this discipline. Its dogmas—1) exclude good works from justification; 2) open the door of evil by denying the freedom of the will; 3) exclude all counsels of perfection. (Matt. xix. 21.)

III. *It possesses both compass and rudder.*—A certain Rule of Faith; Holy Scripture; councils; traditions; and Fathers: all of which the new ship does not possess; hence each sect proves their often opposing doctrines from the Bible as interpreted by themselves.

IV. *It is built of sound material.*—New ship is compacted of old worm-eaten, discarded timbers; conceiving every exploded heresy.

V. *It is large enough to carry the world.*—Not easily—1) conquered by enemies; 2) absorbed by the waves; different from small sectarian ships.

Epilogue.—Endanger not the voyage by choosing a new ship.

SERMON 446.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“And it came to pass . . . and followed Him.”—*Luke v. 1-12.*

Introduction.—Had He wished it, the Lord could have resisted the pressure of the crowd, and yet have preached from the shore. He entered into a ship, etc.; since the sea represents Holy Scripture, upon which the preacher takes his stand; the ship signifies the authoritative and traditional interpretation of Holy Scripture. He ‘thrust out a little,’ indicates that the preacher’s teaching is heavenly, and not earthly. The partial unloosing of the ship denotes the freedom of the Gospel. (2 Tim. ii. 9.) The motion of ship in the water typifies the exciting nature of the Divine word. Let us stand, then, on the shore and learn—

I. *From the People.*—Fervour in hearing the word of God. 1) They went from their homes to the uninhabited shores of the sea. 2) ‘They pressed upon Him,’ not this time for bodily, but for spiritual healing; that they might lose none of His words. 3) They continued standing in a dense crowd, and were not wearied. A fear lest we become like the Israelites, ever desiring to hear something new (Num. xi. 4-6); lest the Ninevites rise up by their repentance to condemn us.

II. *From the Disciples of Jesus Christ.*—1) Patience and evenness of temper under contrary things. Still cheerful after a night’s useless toil. 2) That nothing is prosperous without the Presence of Jesus Christ, and His blessing. 3) To trust in God and His promises, even when His word seems to fail. 4) To obey all the directions of God; not to question His word. (Isa. xlv. 9.) 5) To help one’s neighbour; both ships united in landing the net.

III. *From Jesus Christ.*—1) Kindness. a) Not angry with the pressing crowd. b) He accepted the use of the humble fishing boat. c) He asked where He might have commanded. d) Comforted S. Peter under his humble fear. 2) His power in the command: the fishes came. 3) His liberality, so largely rewarding obedience and faith.

SERMON 447.

THE LIFE OF DEATH.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Dead with Christ.”—*Rom.* vi. 8.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ brought a new life and a new death into the world. Showed men that there is a life which is deadness, and that there is a dying which gives life. The dying life leads onwards and upwards to the eternal day. All God's holy ones are dead with Jesus Christ; and they are like to the dead for five reasons. Their life is—

I. *A resigned life.*—They have given up their souls to God, just as the dead have given up their souls to their Creator. The holy have given up their souls to Jesus Christ, Who died that they might live; Who bought their souls at the price of His own precious life. (1 Cor. v. 15.)

II. *A separated life.*—A separation between the body and the soul occurs at death; when the soul passes into the intermediate state, and the body to the earth. This is now true of those also with bodies still on earth, and with affections set on things above. (Phil. iii. 20.)

III. *An abstracted life.*—They have lost both sense and taste for earthly things. Former joys and sorrows cannot influence them now; they are dead to the old life; and the dead have no senses left of taste, touch, sight, hearing, smelling. The things in which they rejoiced delight no longer. The holy have lost their sense of this world's pleasure or pain. (Ps. xxxviii. 13, 14.) The holy have only sensibility as to the things of God. (Ps. xxvii. 4.)

IV. *A hidden life.*—The dead are invisible; their bodies are buried, their souls are taken away from men's sight. An unburied body would be exposed to many indignities: to be eaten by birds, torn by dogs, etc. A hidden life belongs to the holy; a life which the world calls death. (Coloss. iii. 3.) Hence the prophecy and promise (Isa. xxxii. 2); and Goliath's boast, he who represents the devil. (1 Sam. xvii. 44.)

V. *A despised life.*—The dead are despised; all glory and beauty has passed away from them; they are loathed. The world forgets and despises the dead; the sea casts them forth. World despises and casts forth the holy. (1 Cor. iv. 13.)

Epilogue.—Be not dead with, but to the devil and to sin, and so alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SERMON 448.

THE CAPTIVITY OF SIN.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Henceforth we should not serve sin.”—*Rom.* vi. 6.

Introduction.—There is no aspect of sin more terrible than the captivity which it causes. It binds down the soul with iron chains to the world, the flesh, and the devil; it produces a slavery the most abject and profound. For sin is a state of—

I. *True captivity.*—Before sin came into the world man was free, after it he became tied and bound by sin, so that if he be free as to the desire of the will he is tied as to its execution. (*Prov.* xvi. 9.) The sinner may ‘devise his own way,’ but the Lord ‘directed his steps,’ or life. So. (*Jer.* x. 23.) The sinner may desire but he cannot gain his freedom. How is this captivity reached? (2 *Peter* ii. 19.) As in the old combats, in the lists, the course was guarded, and the friends of each combatant awaited the result, so does God guard the course of our spiritual combat, and our friends are prophets, apostles, martyrs, etc., all of whom are anxious and prayerful that we be not led captive by our adversary Satan. Sin—1) subjugates the will; 2) hardens the affections; 3) deadens the conscience.

II. *Dangerous captivity.*—As a man walking along a precipice who loses his footing, in falling may be saved by a single projecting branch or shrub from an infinite abyss, so is the sinner hanging over the pit of hell saved by a branch of grace; unable to regain the lost path, he is in instant danger of sinking below. (*Ps.* cxvi. 3.) The holy are preserved from this danger. (*Isa.* lviii. 14.) Hence we learn to—1) look to our steps (*1 Cor.* x. 12); 2) look upwards when we fall for deliverance. (*Ps.* cxxi. 1.)

III. *Unbearable captivity.*—The hardness of it implies the need of a quick redemption from it. As the Israelites went quickly out of Egypt. For (*Rom.* xv. 4.) They went out—1) having cooked the lamb; so we (*Ps.* li. 1-17) 2) Out of houses; from evil associations. (*Matt.* xviii. 8.) 3) Over the Red Sea of sorrow and suffering. 4) To the desert of repentance. 5) And were fed with the Manna of God. (*John* vi. 32.)

Epilogue.—Quickly, at once, seek deliverance from sin in the mercy and love of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 449.

THE SPIRITUAL OFFERING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“If thou bring thy gift to the altar . . . come and offer thy gift.”—
Matt. vi. 23, 24.

Introduction.—Our righteousness must not be in part and imperfect, or wanting in love; for if so it is false; but rather entire and without corruption. The meat offering (Lev. ii. 11-13) is the fulfilling of God's commandments. The ‘leaven,’ is corruption; ‘honey,’ the sweetness of external things. Failings may arise—1) In the offering not being properly made, having ‘leaven’ and ‘honey’ mixed with it. 2) From a want of devotion in the offerer, which is signified by frankincense. (Lev. ii. 1-15; Ps. cxli. 2.) 3) From a want of intention, as to the doing it to God's honour and glory. (Lev. iii. 16.) The ‘fat’ signifies the right intention, which gives to the work the fatness of strength. (Amb.) All these three conditions are necessary when we offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise upon the altar of the soul. And in addition to these, we must be at peace with man ere we can be so with God, Let us consider—

I. *The oblation to be made.*—‘Offer thy gift,’ which is threefold. 1) Bodily substance, in the body. 2) Spiritual substance, in the soul. 3) Temporal substance, in possessions. (Ps. iv. 5.)

II. *The preparation before the oblation.*—‘And there rememberest;’ if there be an offence in thought, make reparation in thought; if in word, by word; if in deed, by act; so as to leave thy brother with nothing to lay to thy charge.

III. *The completion of the oblation.*—‘Then come and offer thy gift.’ We pass from the love of our neighbour to the love of God; we seek Divine, having effected human, peace. Peace and concord amongst men is very much in God's sight. All our works are to be performed in love.

Epilogue.—If we sin against the laws we are punished; if against the Church we are liable to excommunication; if against love and mercy we shall be excluded from the society of the blessed.

SERMON 450.

THE GRADES OF ANGER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.”—*Matt. v. 22.*

Introduction—Some hold that anger has no place with the wise; for Socrates drank the poison unjustly administered, considering it to be the medicine of that immortality upon which he was discoursing. Others maintain that anger exists, but under restraint, in the wisest minds; as Xenophon, who took off his crown, hearing that his son was dead, and put it on again on further hearing that he died nobly and bravely in battle. Anger becomes the Christian; not anger against a brother, but against his fault. Our Blessed Lord was most merciful to sinners, but most angry against sin. Hence the clause ‘without a cause.’ Four grades of anger are to be shunned.

I. *Anger in the heart*.—‘Angry with his brother.’ A fire in the soul—1) Quickly kindled and quickly extinguished; 2) quickly kindled and slowly extinguished; 3) slowly kindled and slowly extinguished; 4) slowly kindled and quickly extinguished.

II. *Anger expressed in signs*.—Anger in voice: ‘raca!’ ‘hah!’ or ‘hem!’ by which the flag of anger is unfurled in the citadel of soul. Such are in danger of the council of the Ever Blessed Trinity, which decrees that love is to rule in the heart. Of such the command is given by God to His angels and servants. (Jer. vii. 16.)

III. *Anger expressed in words*.—Anger in voices, and vituperation. ‘Thou fool.’ Our Blessed Lord (Luke xxiv. 25.) S. Paul. (Gal. iii. 1.) This is spoken, not to confound, but simply to correct. The art of speech is to say the best things in the best manner; not the best things in a bad manner.

IV. *Anger expressed in deeds*.—This leads to homicide; the homicide of a man’s self, of his soul, of his good name. Anger indeed is a slaying sword. (Matt. xxvi. 52.)

Epilogue.—The angry will be punished with a threefold sword. (Ezek. xxi. 14.) First death: everlasting burning. (Matt. xiii. 42.) Second death: separation from the blessed. (Matt. xiii. 30.) Third death: loss of beatification. (Matt. xiii. 42.)

SERMON 451.

IMPERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. III.)

“Except your righteousness enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—
Matt. v. 20.

Introduction.—Righteousness or justice is not here understood of the cardinal virtue of rendering to each one their due, but it is used by our Blessed Lord in a general sense, to include the sum and substance of all the Christian graces. The two divisions of righteousness are—1) to abstain from sin; 2) to follow holiness. (Aug.) The righteousness of the text is severely condemned as being imperfect (*Matt. xxiii. 23*), and this imperfection extends to three particulars.

I. *Truth in judgment.*—(*Isa. l. 23*; *Wisd. vi. 2-8.*)—Truth not only judging officially between man and man, according to law, but in forming opinions—1) upon our own actions, sins, and failings; and 2) upon those of our neighbours. Our own hearts are like tinted glass, they invest all things with their own hue. These Scribes and Pharisees condemned what was not worthy of condemnation, and did not condemn that which God had most plainly and emphatically denounced.

II. *Mercy in forgiveness.*—The suavity of mercy was alien to the righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees, which was a hard, unbending code, both rigid and severe. To them applies (*James ii. 13*). Hence the prophet's complaint. (*Hosea iv. 1.*) God is ever more merciful than man, as David knew full well. (*2 Sam. xxiv. 14.*) 1) God makes allowances, seeing all things, that man cannot afford to make for sin and imperfection. 2) There is no rivalry with Him between the judge and the judged; between the creature and the Creator.

III. *Faithfulness in preservation.*—(*Matt. xxiv. 12*; *Jer. ix. 3, 5.*) They lost their early traces of real and God-like righteousness; most of the purer and better articles of their earlier creed. To ourselves the lessons of (*Heb. ii. 1*; *Rev. iii. 2.*)

Epilogue.—(*Deut. vi. 2, 24*; *x. 12.*)—Beware of a broken, halting, imperfect righteousness, that reaches not down to the foundation of a heart renewed by Divine grace.

SERMON 452.

OUR GIFT TO GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Come and offer thy gift.”—*Matt. v. 24.*

Introduction.—Our every gift ought to be offered to God, or our every work so performed, that it may tend—1) To the honour and glory of God. (1 Cor. x. 31.) ‘There is a ministry even in the sleep of the saints, since from it they rise refreshed to praise God.’ (Greg.) 2) To produce its proper fruit, which is the salvation of the soul. (Mark viii. 36.) 3) To edify our neighbour, for every good work becomes divine in proportion as it becomes common. Our gift which is due to God, takes four forms; that of—

I. *Burning love from the heart.*—This love consecrates every thought, word, and deed; it corrects all anger. Without it all else is vain. (1 Cor. xiii. 1-4.) Love made Abel’s sacrifice acceptable. We must love our brother if we would love God. (1 John iv. 20.) The Lord says (*Matt. v. 22*); condemning anger in thought, sign, or expression, and in speech.

II.—*An acceptable word from the mouth.*—A grateful and acceptable word is a sweet odour, if it be rightly and sincerely offered in—1) contrite confession of sin; and 2) in burning love. The old sacrifices of the law were first purified by water, and then consumed by fire. Saul’s confession and prayer not acceptable, for it was unaccompanied by contrition. (1 Sam. xv. 26.)

III. *The helping hand of compassion.*—If the power to give it be present, the deed is accepted; if it be absent, the intention. For (*Matt. xxv. 40.*) Abel suffered; Noah saved the world; Abraham sustained the faith, etc. All God’s servants have done good.

IV. *A penitent and a contrite heart.*—By this the whole life is consecrated and devoted to the service of God by acts of devotion. (John xii. 26; *Matt. xvi. 24.*) Three classes who cannot give this. (Deut. xxv. 5-8.) New ‘house,’ pride; ‘vineyard,’ worldly care; ‘wife,’ carnal affections.

Epilogue.—Our gift must be—1) earnest; 2) free; 3) cheerful; 4) entire.

SERMON 453.

INWARD RIGHTEOUSNESS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

"I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt. v. 20.*

Introduction.—Who does not tremble to hear our Blessed Lord, God's dearly beloved Son, saying these words. The Pharisees, the strictest sect of the Jews, prayed long both day and night; they fasted twice in the week, and paid tithes; slept on bare boards; had the law ever before their eyes; were moderate in food and clothing, and abstained from all pleasure and luxury. Yet Jesus Christ wanted something more of them. Was it perfection? Does He despise righteousness? Neither the one nor the other; but certain defects render righteousness valueless to God, Who searcheth all hearts. God despises—

I. *External righteousness.*—Which leads men to displease God rather than their fellow men. They adorn what is outward; leave unclean what God sees, and what is inward. (*Lev. xi. 18.*) The swan is unclean; it is white in feather but dark in its flesh, like the Pharisees. (*Matt. xxii. 27.*) We must prepare the inner chamber of the soul to receive Jesus Christ as a guest. Eli adorned the bodies of his sons, but he left their souls all uncleansed and undisciplined. (*1 Sam. ii. 28, 29.*)

II. *Inward righteousness only.*—Jesus Christ commands. (*Matt. v. 16.*) The ark was to be gilded without as well as within. (*Exod. xxv. 11.*) The spouse was as fair in mind as in appearance (*Cant. i. 16; iv. 1.*), in thought, and also in good deeds. We must not only be good, but seem to be good, else a scandal is created. Outward works and mien indicate internal feeling. S. Tiburtius denied before the Prefect that Torquatus was a Christian, because he was voluptuously dressed.

III. *False and counterfeited righteousness.*—Directed to vain glory and other temporal ends: as the coming to Church to see and to be seen; hearing sermons to criticise; the giving of alms from ostentation, etc. As the Jews came to Bethlehem. (*John xii. 9.*) The prophet describes such righteous ones as these. (*Hag. i. 6.*) Such are hypocrites who shall perish. (*Job. viii. 13.*)

IV. *A worldly conforming righteousness.*—Of such (*Isa. xlv. 6, 7.*) Saul thinking to please the people. (*1 Sam. xv. 9, 15, 24.*) 'I feared the people.' Conflict between Church and world.

Epilogue.—Seek that true righteousness which will abide the judgment. (*Psa. lxxv. 2; Peter iv. 18.*)

SERMON 454.

HELPS AGAINST ANGER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.”—*Matt v. 22.*

Introduction.—S. Gregory the Great compares our life to a voyage at sea. When the winds and storms of anger come, as skilful sailors how can we avoid shipwreck. Let us take S. Paul’s shipwreck as our guide (Acts xxvii) when the storm of anger rages in the breast.

I. *Commend the cause to God.*—After a long abstinence a vision cheered S. Paul. (Acts xxvii. 21-23.) So Hannah commended herself. (1 Sam. i. 10.) So David at the cave Engedi. (1 Sam. xxiv. 6.) The tempest of anger against Saul raged strong, yet it did not shipwreck David. The memory of the Redeemer’s Passion, will enable all men to bear all things with a calm mind. (Rom. xii. 19-21.)

II. *Be slow to wrath.*—‘We sailed slowly many days’ (Acts xxvii. 17), taking in sailing power, lest the ship should be dashed upon the rocks. Hence the command. (James i. 19.) Give time to anger, and you will overcome it. The fasces carried by the lictors before the consuls were bound with ropes, to signify that time must elapse between the offence and its punishment. In time anger, like snow, melts away, and we save many an heartache if we restrain ourselves until we are cool, and have had time for reflection.

III. *Lighten the ship of the soul.*—Cast many human longings and desires out of it. Not until the wheat was cast into the sea was it that the ship was fairly lightened. (Acts xxvii. 38.) An Egyptian asked an Anchorite the reason of his way of life. ‘That I may cut off all occasion of anger.’ For we are often angry because we have lost money, or fame, or honour, or some worldly advantage.

IV. *Occupy the soul.*—S. Paul diverted the minds of his companions for a short time from their danger by taking food. (Acts xxvii. 35, 36.) Change of thought and of employment prevents the mind from brooding over one thought of anger till it settles into wrath.

Epilogue.—As the mariners waited for day (Acts xxvii. 29), so we ought not to let the sun go down upon our wrath.

SERMON 455.

THE SACRIFICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. VII.*)

“Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—*Matt. v. 20.*

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord in saying (*Matt. vi. 26*), began a new scheme of teaching; things inward are of infinitely more value than things outward. It is quite possible for a man to give his substance to God, and himself at the same time to the devil. This was the sin of Cain (*Gen. iv. 7*); he was willing to give God everything but himself. The Pharisees thought that God would be as well pleased with a multitude of sacrifices, as the guests at a banquet are with the multitude of dishes. True righteousness claims—

I. *An inward sacrifice.*—(*Ps. li. 16, 17.*)—The holocaust, or burnt-offering, was chief among the legal sacrifices, but even this was not accepted instead of a contrite heart. The offering of self upon the altar of repentance is one acceptable sacrifice to God. (*Ps. li. 17.*)

II. *A living sacrifice.*—(*Rom. xii. 1.*)—Such as is unlike that of Saul. (*1 Sam. xiii. 12.*) One offered from the living soul, as being the principle of all that thinks, desires, and acts (*Prov. iv. 24*; *John vi. 63*); consecrated by divine grace.

III. *A holy sacrifice.*—Free from any second motive; from all ‘eye service;’ ‘not with the hope of gaining aught, or seeking a reward.’ God requires pure and disinterested righteousness to flow from the heart.

IV. *An entire sacrifice.*—Not half a soul is accepted by God. (*Matt. vi. 24.*) We can divide our time, money, affections, and pursuits amongst several earthly things, giving to each a fair proportion; but God accepts no such division as this. We either serve God altogether, or the devil altogether. Reason of this is the broad distinction that there is between the laws and principles of the kingdoms of light and darkness, which are so entirely opposed to each other.

Epilogue.—Surrendering up ourselves to Jesus Christ; our will to His will; our life to His example; our love to His compassion; our righteousness is by Him—1) accepted; 2) perfected; 3) rewarded.

SERMON 456.

THE APPROACH TO JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)

“Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—*Matt. v. 20.*

Introduction.—The kingdom of heaven has, amongst other meanings that of the person of Jesus Christ Himself, Who in Himself summoned up all the graces as well as all the mystery of Godliness. To enter into the kingdom of heaven, then, is to come nigh to Jesus Christ, Who being true God is rather to be approached with the soul than with the body; by the will and spiritual understanding than by the bodily feet. We note—

I. *Some who enter into this kingdom.*—1) The Centurion (*Matt. viii. 8-14*) who came far closer to Jesus Christ than did the ‘Elders of the Jews’ who were sent by him (*Luke viii. 3*); and yet said, ‘Neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee.’ Yet was carried upon the swift wings of an understanding instructed in the faith; and kindled by a love in the will, he flew to Him in spirit. 2) The woman with an issue of blood, who touched the hem of His garment (*Matt. ix. 20*; *Luke viii. 43-49*), and who by faith came nearer to Him than all the rest of the crowd which thronged Him. 3) The Publican standing afar off (*Luke xviii. 13, 14*), by his humility and sense of sin, came very near to Him indeed. 4) Jehoshaphat who ‘feared, and set himself to seek the Lord.’ (*2 Chron. xx. 3.*)

II. *What is required of they who enter.*—(*Exod. xxxiv. 20*; *Deut. xvi. 16.*)—This emptiness is the shadow without the substance; the shell without the kernel; the form without the spirit. The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was empty; being void of—1) Love: no going out of the heart towards God. 2) Faith: no real trust and hope in Him. 3) Obedience: springing from the desire to please Him. A fulness of heart is required that must find an expression in thought, word, and deed.

Epilogue.—The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was a body without soul; a graven image, laid over with gold and silver, and yet void of breath. (*Hab. ii. 19.*)

SERMON 457.

THE TEMPLE OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.

“Except your righteousness shall exceed . . . enter into the kingdom of heaven.”—*Matt. v. 20.*

Introduction.—The soul is God’s dwelling-place in which He is abiding rather than in heaven or earth, or in any material temple whatsoever; and upon which He is ever seeking to confer honour, dignity, and blessedness. The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees left this Temple impure and unfit for God to dwell in it; and it requires true righteousness to make—

I. *The conscience free and secure.*—This is the effect of blamelessness and purity, and when this purity is disturbed, without being defiled, true contrition washes away the disturbing cause. Such, as opposed to the sinner, must love God before themselves. This love is the ground of true contrition, which grieves to have driven so kind and loving a God out of His own Temple; and which would still grieve if neither a heaven nor a hell existed. This is that real contrition of soul which frees the conscience from sin, although a man may shed no tears.

II. *The mind equal and indifferent.*—This state brings great peace with it; not an indifference as to things themselves, but as to their action and results upon ourselves. This indifference comes from entire resignation to the Will of God; from a seeking after and a following God. He who seeks not God in all things, finds Him in nothing. The prize which is set before us makes us indifferent to the toil of the contest.

III. *The justice as well as the love of God is to be admired and sought after.*—Many ardently love and desire the mercy of God who dread His justice; yet the foundation of His goodness is, that what He does of compassion He does also of justice; for justice compelled Him to be merciful. The Fatherhood of God leads to His love of, and compassion for, His children.

Epilogue.—Our righteousness is, to be free in Jesus Christ; to have our affections set on things above; to rejoice in God in all things, in His justice as well as in His mercy.

SERMON 458.**THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—***(Holy Gospel,
Ser. X.)*

“I say unto you that except . . . the uttermost farthing.”—*Matt. v. 20-27.*

Introduction.—When God promulgated the Law on Mount Sinai with terror and majesty, the Jews in consternation said to Moses (Exod. xx. 19) so God promised. (Deut. xviii. 15, 18.) This Prophet speaks to us in to-day’s Gospel.

I. *The righteousness required of a Christian.*—A righteousness beyond that of the Scribes and Pharisees. These words were spoken not to His disciples alone. (Matt. vii. 28, 29.) The Pharisees led a chaste, austere, ceremonial life; and they were condemned. How much more will be those false Christians who do not imitate them even in their care and morality. We ought to try our armour of life, as David tried Saul’s. (1 Sam. xvii. 39.) The Scribes and Pharisees were not condemned for what they did, but for their want of love.

II. *Hearing before reading.*—‘Ye have heard,’ not read. So (Luke xvi. 29). To the doctors and lawyers, on the contrary, the Lord said. (Luke x. 26.) Apt to go wrong when reading—1) With a natural bias; 2) without sufficient knowledge; 3) without due care. Jesus Christ protects His Church from false doctrine, and causes His ministers to be instructed.

III. *Anger is to be restrained.*—Also injurious words. Anger a wholesome passion in itself. It is needed in the world. Eli wanted more of it; still it needs to be restrained.

IV. *Both Altar and Sacrifice are in the Church.*—The three correlatives are, Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice. Altar (Heb. xiii. 10); Sacrifice (Luke xxii. 19); Priest (Heb. vii. 12.) The old order is changed but not abrogated.

V. *Brotherly reconciliation.*—(Matt. xviii. 21, 22, 35.)—It is needful to come before God with a mind—1) At peace; 2) in love.

VI. *The limit of Christian liberty.*—It does not exclude the law; it binds us the more closely to it. The higher the walls the greater security within the city; the stricter the code the greater the freedom under it.

SERMON 459.

THE SERVICE OF GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Being made free from sin and become servants to God.”—*Rom.* vi. 22.

Introduction.—When the gain, content, and power that flow from the service of God are considered, it is wonderful why men do not more heartily embrace it. More wonderful still, perhaps, why men forsake the very best for the very worst master possible, whose wages are either eternal misery or eternal death. It is all gain to serve God, it is all loss to serve Satan. Why is the good master so often forsaken for the very worst master of all?

I. *From a sense of false shame.*—The young especially, living amidst bad companions, are ashamed of serving God; they blush at being thought His servants, they are content to be taken for the servants of the devil. They blush that they walk more consistently than do others; that they see things in a higher and a better light. Fear and shame are Godlike; false craven fear and shame are devilish.

II. *From a sense of burdensome obligation.*—God’s gifts and providences are all acknowledged, and the debt seems to be so infinite and crushing, that the only thing to do is to disallow it altogether. We owe so much, that we seek to avoid the creditor. We put off our day of reckoning, trusting to escape from it altogether.

III. *From a sense of gloom in His service.*—Men dread the service of God as being dark and gloomy and morose; as cutting off from life all joy and gladness of heart. Such have not yet learned the grand lesson that sin is sorrow. Such disbelieve (*Matt.* xi. 28, 29, 30) that God’s service is absolute and entire ‘rest,’ with an easy burden and the lightest possible yoke.

IV. *From a sense of distrust of God’s care.*—Unmindful of Daniel, Elijah, etc., they cannot trust God; they doubt His power and will; they realize not (*Matt.* vi. 33; *Luke* xii. 24; *Ps.* cxlvii.)

Epilogue.—Pray for divine grace to clear the mind of all such false notions; then learn and do God’s Will.

SERMON 460.

THE GRACE OF GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The gift of God is eternal life.”—*Rom.* vi. 23.

Introduction.—‘The gift of God’ is the grace of God, which works in all the faithful, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in this present life. As water cannot by its own nature ascend, but it can be made to ascend, in one place flowing from a still higher level; so our good works by themselves cannot ascend to God; but they do so ascend when they are sanctified by that divine grace of which our Blessed Lord speaks. (*John* iv. 14.) Three special operations of grace, as ‘the Gift of God,’ which lead men to eternal life.

I. *The escape from deadly sin.*—The sole work of grace; we fall into it by our own will, we escape from it only by the grace of God. (*Eccles.* iii. 19, 20.) For (*Gen.* ii. 7) therefore (*Gen.* iii. 19). Soul created out of nothing goes to nothing when erring in sin. (*Hosea* xiii. 9.) ‘Israel’ is ‘seeing God,’ and represents the Christian man, who sees God in the Person of Jesus Christ. Dominion of sin and the grace of God act at the same moment in the heart. Deadly sin is a vast abyss; to escape from which God gives us the ladder of grace, of which some of the rounds are knowledge of sin, contrition, resolutions of amendment, etc.

II. *The preservation of the spiritual life.*—We cannot persevere in the spiritual life without the grace of God, being attacked by so many enemies—1) The inclinations of the flesh; 2) the occasions of the world; 3) the temptations of the devil; and 4) our own weakness. (2 *Tim.* iii. 12) is quite true of the faithful in every age of the world.

III. *The guide to heavenly glory.*—We are God’s slaves and servants. Preserved ever by divine grace we can claim nothing at His hand. He says to us at the judgment. (*Luke* xvii. 9, 10.) We then plead, by the presence of that grace which is the spirit of adoption, not for justice and dessert, but for boundless mercy. For (*Rom.* viii. 14-18.)

Epilogue.—Pray and strive, that this gift of grace may be in you and abound.

SERMON 461.

SPIRITUAL REFECTION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“They did eat and were filled.”—*Mark* viii. 8.

Introduction.—No more want and weariness; all discomfort of the body removed. When Jesus Christ fills us with the grace of His Spirit, there is no room for further want or desire; the soul being satisfied, strengthened, and refreshed. (*John* vii. 37, 38.) We note upon this miracle of feeding—

I. *The concomitant condition*.—One of true humility. ‘He commanded the people to sit down on the ground.’ No food unless this was done. The sweetness of spiritual grace vanishes when humility is absent. (*James* iv. 6.) The heart must be emptied of pride ere there is room in it for the grace and love of Jesus Christ. Pride takes away the appetite for grace; like sweets which cloy the stomach, and cause it to reject healthful and wholesome food.

II. *The refectory feeding*.—‘Seven loaves.’ These represent the seven gifts of God the Holy Ghost. The three theological and four cardinal virtues; or, the seven saving considerations by which the soul is nourished as the body is by bread. These considerations are—1) The benefits of Creation (*Gen.* i. 27.) 2) The benefits of redemption. (*Rev.* v. 9.) 3) Our call to God. (*1 Pet.* ii. 9.) 4) The Lord’s waiting. (*Isa.* xxx. 18.) 5) Illumination by which sinners are enlightened to repentance. (*Ps.* cxlvi. 8.) 6) The compassion of the Lord making us fit to receive His compassion. (*Jer.* iii. 12.) 7) The promise of glory; for the kingdom of heaven is promised to the penitent. (*Matt.* iii. 2.) These considerations are the loaves with which the Lord satisfies the soul of the true penitent when He makes him to taste the Divine goodness. The ‘few fishes’ signify the saints, who sustain their brethren by their example.

III. *The satiative filling*.—‘Were filled,’ and an abundance remained (*Luke* i. 53); more even than existed at the beginning. The more there was used, the more there was to be used. So ever is it with the gifts of grace; they increase by our use of them.

Epilogue.—Oh! see that hindered by fear or sincere repentance you do not fail of this great refreshment of the grace of God; and thus starving the spiritual life, fall away into condemnation.

SERMON 462.

THE THREE DAYS DWELLING.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. II.)

“They have now been with me three days.”—*Mark* viii. 2.

Introduction.—The third day signifies the day of perfection. The world’s first day was before the law, and it gave the example of the Patriarchs; the second day was under the law, with the added teaching of Prophets; the third day was under the Gospel, with the reign of grace, and the united example and teaching of Jesus Christ. Each day indicates a higher state, and a better grade, than its predecessors: moral significance of the three days.

I. *To abide one day is a beginning.*—So did S. Andrew and his companion. (John i. 30.) This signifies the beginning of our vocation of the spiritual life and conviction. A blessed day and night to abide with the Lord; it lasts for a short season only. It forms our refuge in sorrow or trouble, our solace under conviction of sin; but all too soon, alas! the world takes us away, and claims us again. The pleasant voice is no more heard; the good resolutions are now broken. This very beginning is of grace; and it is valuable in itself to a certain degree, but still it is not sufficient.

II. *To abide two days is the advancing.*—So Peter and Andrew followed Him (John i. 40), and then went back to the world. It was S. Andrew’s second day; an advance of progress; a great gain upon the former dwelling, for “they followed Him;” not till afterwards going back to their old life. We often make a great advance and progress in holiness ere we give ourselves entirely up to God.

III. *To abide three days is a state of perfection.*—S. Andrew and Peter were called by the Lake of Gennesaret. (Matt. iv. 22.) This was the day of illumination, of tarrying, of perfection. Cf. (John xv. 4, 5.) Such go on unto perfection, being saved by their final perseverance.

Epilogue.—Oh! let us all, in the way of holiness, resolve, advance, and go on unto our perfection.

SERMON 463.

THE FOOD OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“They did eat and were filled.”—*Mark* viii. 8.

Introduction.—Before this (*S. Matt.* xiv. 15-22; *Mark* vi. 35-45; *John* vi. 5-14) five thousand had been fed with five barley loaves and two small fishes. Now seven loaves, not of barley, and more than two fishes, and only four thousand fed. First feeding was that of the law upon the five books of Moses; the second was that of the Gospel. In the first the harshness of the law was expressed in the barley loaves, which represent the asperity of fear; in the second, the sweetness of wheaten bread represents the joy and peace of the Gospel. At the first feeding, for the beginners, five thousand were fed; at the second, for the perseverant, only four thousand. If the Lord had such care for the perishable body, can we believe that He left the soul without refreshment? The spiritual refection here typified under the miracle is a prelude to the everlasting marriage supper of the Lamb. Three points are noted as needful to rightly receive this heavenly refection.

I. *The endurance of a bitter compunction.*—Bitter things must be tasted before sweet. Those only who have grieved in bitterness of soul over their sins can obtain divine consolation. (*Matt.* v. 4; *Luke* vi. 24.) This bitterness of compunction is expressed in the words “having nothing to eat.” Every thought upon which the mind could feed is tainted with this bitterness. This sorrow leaves the soul hungry and destitute. It says (*Isa.* xxxviii. 15).

II. *Perseverance of inward abstraction.*—He who lays himself out for outward pleasures does not receive spiritual grace. Such remain “three days” in the desert; removing themselves from common life during the days of contrition, confession, and satisfaction. As the Lord fed the Israelites with manna in the desert, after they had crossed the Red Sea, so does Jesus Christ feed us in the spiritual desert.

III. *The efficacy of a holy devotion.*—By this the soul cleaves to God. Of these Jesus says “They have been with Me” in heart, soul, and affection. This refection is only given to those who cling to God. (*Jer.* xvii. 13.) On the other hand (*Psa.* xxxvii. 4). So did SS. Antony, Francis, Hilarion, and others, who clave to God, and could say (*Psa.* xxxi. 19).

Epilogue.—Refresh the soul, which is far more worthy than the body, and refuse not the King who bids thee come. (*Matt.* xi. 28.)

SERMON 464.

MAN AND THE WORLD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“He commanded the people to sit down on the ground.”—*Mark* viii. 6.

Introduction.—No work of art will bear the test of a powerful microscope, for by it every imperfection is revealed in a moment. All the works of nature bear the closest examination: the more minutely they are studied, the more wonderful do they show themselves to be. So with the works and words of men: they will not endure any very rigorous and searching tests; their imperfections are laid bare in a moment. Examine with the keenest criticism, by every power that man possesses, the words and works of Jesus Christ, their glory and perfection can never be sufficiently understood or admired. The command in this Gospel teaches a lesson of humility; but it teaches far more than this: it points out man's relationship to this world and life in which he is now placed. We note three classes of men—

I. *Those who sit beneath the earth.*—Such are they who bear upon their heads the weight of this world's—1) Sin: 2) sorrow; 3) possessions. They are weighed down beneath the ground. Life, with its hopes, aims, brightness, and work, is a thing above them. The sinner foredates his doom, since now he lives an inferior or under life.

II. *Those who sit upon the earth.*—Such are—1) Humble, but not degraded. 2) Affectionate, but not slaves to human ties. 3) Thankful for temporal blessings, yet not resting in them either for salvation or happiness. Such as these fulfil the Lord's command and the Apostolic injunction. (1 Cor. vii. 29, 32.)

III. *Those who sit above the earth.*—Such are the perfect: 1) Utterly unselfish. (Matt. xix. 21.) 2) Dead to the world. (Coloss. iii. 2.) 3) Heavenly citizens. (Phil. iii. 20; Rom. vi. 4.) This state is vouchsafed to but few of God's servants.

Epilogue.—Aim at the highest state, and be content with the middle walk.

SERMON 465.

HUMAN MINISTRATION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“He gave to His disciples to set before them.”—*Mark* viii. 6.

Introduction.—In this miracle the gentle mediation of the disciples forms a striking feature. The disciples were mediators between Jesus Christ and the multitude, since He did not distribute the bread Himself, but ‘He gave to His disciples . . . and they did set before the people.’ In relation to giving and receiving, there were three classes of persons, which are also represented in the world now.

I. *Those who receive and give not.*—Under this head must be included very many who are—1) Unthankful. Such recognise no blessings; render back to God no thanks for His mercies. From man they ever accept, and never lovingly acknowledge their obligation. 2) Covetous. Self is all their love and care: no matter who may be in want, if plenty is with themselves. 3) Lawless. They recognise no mutual relationship, either between God and themselves, or between themselves and man. Such are like the dark places on the earth, which receive light and give back none in return. Such was ‘the multitude.’

II. *Those who both receive and give.*—They are—1) The thankful, who are ready to repay in every way, as far as they are able, the infinite debt which they feel they owe both to God and man. 2) The generous, who have learned. (*Acts* xx. 35.) Their greatest happiness consists in ministering to others. All riches and blessings are only so many several means by which they can do good. 3) The obedient. They look forward to an account which will be one day made of their stewardship; they hold their all as a loan from God. Such, like the moon, shine with a light which is given by God. They, like the disciples, give as they receive.

III. *Those receive not, yet give.*—Only in its lower sense appeals to those in this life, who are entirely disinterested in all they do. No thought of recompence ever crosses their mind. Such imitate the Lord in this miracle; the sun in giving light.

Epilogue.—Seek to carry out this Christlike service in the world.

SERMON 466.

THE MIRACLE OF MERCY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“They took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets.”—*Mark* viii. 8.

Introduction.—Only twice did our Blessed Lord multiply bread, and once did He convert water into wine, which fact clearly shows the preciousness of the food and drink of Jesus Christ; and yet He did not allow men to value Him for that alone. Hence the complaint. (*John* vi. 26.) We note some reasons why this miracle was wrought.

I. *To show the Jews that He was God.*—The very God Who had formerly fed their fathers in the wilderness. The disciples ask (*Matt.* xv. 33); the answer, for forty years I sent down heavenly manna. The miracle of Elisha (2 *Kings* iv. 42-44) was only wrought by the word of the Lord; the barley loaves were not touched by the prophet's hand. Our Blessed Lord did this miracle openly, to teach the Jews by Whose power it was that their fathers were so supernaturally fed. The Hebrews received the gift of manna, and yet acknowledged not the Giver. Only a few, like Jacob, saw God's hand. (*Gen.* xlviii. 15.)

II. *To promote our trust in God.*—It was the third day of waiting and privation, and then the help came. So the manna was not given till all the Egyptian food was used up. No wine made at Cana till all the other was consumed. Elijah in type succoured the widow of Zarephath at her last gasp. (1 *Kings* xvii. 12.) Daniel in the lion's den, and Elijah in his exile. (1 *Kings* xvii. 6.)

III. *To show how riches may be increased.*—Had the ‘seven loaves’ not been given away, they would have remained as seven still; they multiplied in their distribution. The hand of Jesus Christ is a fruitful field, which multiplies a thousand-fold; and what is given to the poor is placed in His hand to be multiplied exceedingly. The clouds are taken from the earth but for a short time only, and are returned in most fertile showers to it again.

IV. *To show us our need of the Word of God.*—What food is to the body, that the Word of God is to the soul. The disciples, at the other feeding (*John* vii. 12), gathered up the fragments, to show that they must bear the bread of God with them, and reserve the word in their memory. So Elijah (1 *Kings* xvii. 7, 8) sustained and strengthened with God's food.

Epilogue.—Pray that Jesus Christ may be your prince and physician, for in His house is bread. (*Isa.* iii. 6-9.)

SERMON 467.

THE SITTING MULTITUDE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII).

“He commanded the people to sit down on the ground.”—*Mark* viii. 6.

Introduction.—‘The people’ represent those who are about to receive from God ‘some token for good;’ those whom God is willing to serve and help; and this act of theirs points out plainly the disposition in which we should receive God’s favours to us. We should receive them in—

I. *Faith*.—Only ‘seven loaves’ were set before them, yet they sat down in faith, believing in His will and power to provide for them. No doubt upon their minds when they sat down. Our Blessed Lord did not persuade or ask them to sit down, but ‘commanded,’ to teach us that we must have faith ere we can receive the gifts of grace.

II. *Submissive attention*.—They took their seats as directed to do so; they were attentive and submissive to the command when given. Hence it was easy for the few disciples to feed so large a multitude. Submissive attention must be with us in all our spiritual exercises; wandering thoughts must be driven away; and we must submit our souls to God, placing them in His hands.

III. *Humility*.—Sitting upon the ground implied a humbleness of soul before Jesus Christ and His disciples; and so before His ministers and representatives now the faithful ought to sit down. They humbly sat down, asked no questions, and waited for God’s pleasure concerning them.

IV. *Contentment*.—They acquiesced in their calling, and were filled; whilst many are not filled, because they are never satisfied; they are always looking at something above them which they covet. Discontent is never satisfied.

Epilogue.—‘Sit down’ in obedience to our Lord’s will, in faith, submission, and contentment, and you will be filled.

SERMON 468.

THE REFRESHMENT OF THE LORD.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)

“They that had eaten were about four thousand.”—*Mark viii. 9.*

Introduction.—We must exclaim at this miracle. (Ps. xcii. 5.) Yet it was performed to teach us, that if we now seek to follow Him in Spirit, He will multiply in us His graces, and fill our souls at this time, as formerly He filled the bodies of men. In the present miracle we note the Lord's threefold work.

I. *Of pity.*—‘I have compassion on the multitude.’ (Ps. cxlv. 9.) Not one of that vast multitude but had a share in His solicitude; His Divine heart was open to them all. If we have a compassionate and fellow feeling for others He will endow us with His graces and gifts. (Matt. v. 7.) Our compassion must be expressed in—1) Helping others by our example, our time, our means; 2) defending others from false attacks and injuries; 3) preserving others from falling into sin and error.

II. *Of thanksgiving.*—‘And gave thanks,’ and the fishes ‘He blessed.’ If we render God due and fitting thanks for all His mercies, He also will multiply His blessings towards us. Such thanksgiving leaves a place in the soul which God can fill up with greater favour. This thanksgiving is to be expressed—1) In a grateful, humble feeling towards God; 2) in words; 3) in deeds of love done for His sake.

III. *Of distribution.*—‘Gave to His disciples.’ The loaves and fishes grew under this distribution. So also if we distribute to others, our own riches, means, and knowledge will increase. The more we communicate our learning the more does our knowledge multiply itself. (Luke vi. 38.)

Epilogue.—That is a poor and unworthy love, which is unable to restrain licentiousness of life. Do we not clear away all impediments in order to gain earthly wealth? How much rather should we seek to gain true riches. (Matt. vi. 33.)

SERMON 469.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“He commanded the people to sit down on the ground.”—*Mark* viii. 6.

Introduction.—In both these miracles of feeding, the people were bidden to ‘sit down;’ (*John* vi. 10; *Matt.* xiv. 14; *Mark* vi. 39; *Luke* ix. 14;) teaching us to ‘sit down’ and rest in God’s loving guardianship of and thought for us. Holy Scripture illustrates this care in various ways. From which we note—

I. *God compares Himself to a mother.*—(*Isa.* xli. 3-5.)—Words most full of consolation, and exciting filial piety in us; extending even to the prodigal. (*Luke* xv. 20.) He creates and He sustains. God is to the soul like Bathsheba for Solomon (*1 Kings* i. 15-22), more than the woman. (*2 Kings* vi. 28.) We rest upon (*Isa.* xlix. 15), and try to act up to (*1 Peter* v. 7).

II. *God denies us in very love.*—(*Rom.* viii. 32.)—Shows that if He gave the greater gift, He would, if good for us, give the lesser. (*Luke* xi. 13.)

III. *God is said to dwell among men.*—To engender this special confidence God ordained the Tabernacle, and then the Temple, containing His furniture, His shewbread, and His fire. Fire is His Presence. (*Isa.* xxxi. 9.)

IV. *Our Blessed Lord teaches us this care of God.*—(*Matt.* vi. 25-33.)—From the—1) Dignity of the soul; 2 and 3) the comparison of birds and lilies; 4) the habit of the Gentiles; 5) the knowledge of God of our wants. (v. 32.) Knows our wants more fully than any earthly father can know them.

V. *God severely punishes want of confidence in Him.*—Cases of Ananias and Sapphira. (*Acts* v. 2.) Of Aaron and Moses, both of whom did not enter the Promised Land, because they distrusted God. (*Numb.* xx. 12, 24.)

VI. *Effects of this Fatherly care.*—1) (*Ezek.* xl. 5) ‘the hand-breadth’ is temporal blessings; we the Temple (*1 Cor.* iii. 17) according to (*Matt.* vi. 31). 2) He fed S. Peter. (*Acts* x. 10.) 3) He prevented Balaam cursing the people. (*Numb.* xxiii. 8-20.) 4) He regards calamities as His own. (*2 Sam.* vii. 23, 24.)

SERMON 470.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“In those days the multitude . . . He sent them away.”—*Mark* viii. 1-12.

Introduction.—Pythagoras taught, ‘tread not underfoot small loaves;’ that crumbs are not to be despised. Let us pick up some crumbs from this day’s Gospel and learn—

I. *Compassion from Jesus Christ.*—‘I have compassion,’ etc.—1) For the multitude. Some have compassion in heart but lack means. Jesus Christ had both the will and power. Who then can refuse to trust in Him? 2) He consulted with His disciples. Moses with Jethro. (*Exod.* xviii. 1-9.) Some said to Plato, ‘Are you both teacher and disciple? How long will you continue to learn?’ To which Plato answered: ‘Until I am ashamed to become more wise.’ 3) He observed the day: ‘three days,’ adding they ‘come from far.’ God, unlike Baal (*1 Kings* xviii. 29), observes all man’s wants and the circumstances of his life. (*Ps.* lvi. 8.) 4) He blessed and multiplied the bread. (*Prov.* x. 22; xi. 24.) God always blesses prudent and honest endeavours.

II. *Liberality from the disciples.*—1) They at once, being in a desert place, and having their own needs to supply, distributed to the wants of others. 2) They distributed with care and trouble, leaving no one unserved. So Christians ought to help and serve each other. We ought to feel towards the household of Jesus Christ as David did towards the house of Saul. (*2 Sam.* ix. 1.) 3) They collect the fragments to serve for use on another day.

III. *Patience and confidence from the people.*—1) They remained with Jesus Christ patiently until the third day; hearing His discourse, following Him even into the desert. They were miraculously fed as a reward for patient waiting upon God. 2) They were obedient: being told to sit down they did so, not knowing how they were to be fed, or why the order was given to them. 3) Being seated they patiently waited for their refection; no murmur at the delay. We must not ask for miracles, but wait for God’s providence to operate on our behalf. 4) They were content with the plain food of bread and fish.

SERMON 471.

OUR DEBT TO GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh.”—*Rom.* viii. 12.

Introduction.—We owe the flesh nothing; it has brought us enough, and more than enough, of trouble and sorrow; but we owe our lives to Jesus Christ, Who laid down His life for ours. We owe Him our future lives, in which to lament over and repent of past sin; we owe Him a most loving service, for His promise of good things to come. In an especial manner we owe a threefold debt to God.

I. *A debt of honour.*—1) We must be careful to pay this, lest we usurp His own honour and revenge. (*Isa.* xlii. 8; *Deut.* xxxii. 35; *Rom.* xii. 19); which, if it belonged to us even, we are not to claim for ourselves. We owe God honour as being merely the dispensers of His good providence. (1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20.) For the steward to assume to himself the honour of his lord is a gross betrayal of trust. 2) So to honour God, that we should be ashamed to do anything which in His sight would be a dishonour to Him. 3) Lest we, by our unworthy actions, bring discredit upon His holy Name.

II. *A debt of fear.*—1) That we may shun what He prohibits. (*Prov.* xvi. 6.) 2) In seeking after those things to which God would have us attain. 3) In flying from that by which He threatens. (*Job* xix. 29; *Matt.* x. 28.) Such holy and reverential fear causes us to be true to the service of God.

III. *A debt of love.*—1) God is our Creator, our Parent: the Son of God is the Elder Brother of our race. 2) God is the source of our highest and most perfect joy and goodness, and we are complete in Him. 3) Since we receive so great mercies and benefits from Him. 4) We hope even for greater things from Him by and by.

Epilogue.—To pay this debt makes us rich, and not poor.

SERMON 472.

THE SIGNS OF SONSHIP.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”—*Rom.* viii. 16.

Introduction.—Can we be sure of our own or of others’ filiation to God? Certainly not; since this rests upon the will, of which we are ignorant. Conjecturally yes; as the tree can be judged by its fruit. We are all trees planted in the vineyard of the Church; and trees may be said ‘to walk’ when they put forth leaves, buds, and branches. Hence we all can say (*Mark* viii. 24). The root of the spiritual life is the grace of the Holy Ghost, which cannot be known unless He reveals it. (*1 Cor.* ii. 11.) We can estimate our sonship with God, not by its cause, but by its effects, of which we note three.

I. *Principal imitation.*—The son is assimilated to the father in person; speech, thought, and deed, unless he more accurately resembles his mother. Hence (*John* viii. 39). If God shows the face of His love and election, and hides His rigour of justice, and if a man’s life is ordered after a heavenly pattern, these two signs are sure tests of election. The whole course of grace is one continuous showing of God’s face in love.

II. *Doctrinal correction.*—(*Heb.* xii. 6-9).—The rod of fatherly correction may be of grief, poverty, infirmity; of loss of friends or goods. This rod being given is a sign of sonship; and it is not to be murmured at, but rather received with joy and patience. (*Prov.* iii. 11, 12.)

III. *Spiritual provision.*—When entering a house we can tell by the difference of dress, diet, etc., who are the children of the master, and of his domestics. A provision is made by the father for his children; a spiritual provision by God for His sons. If (*1 Tim.* v. 8) holds good for man, how much more for God? Rules for clothing (*Coloss.* iii. 12; *Rev.* xvi. 15), food, etc.

Epilogue.—Pray we that these signs of our spiritual sonship of God may indeed be wrought in us.

SERMON 473.

GOD'S DEMAND.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.”—*Matt.* vii. 19.

Introduction.—We cut down an unfruitful tree in order to place another tree in its stead, because we need its fruit. God has no such need. Does this statement, then, extend to men? Yes, although (*Ps.* xvi. 1, 2). Why is this sentence decreed against the unfruitful man? Why, in short, does God demand of us good works?

I. *That we may uproot sin.*—Repentance kills sin, but consistent holiness alone can root it out of the heart. A garden requires planting, pruning, and weeding. The garden of the soul is planted by baptism, pruned by repentance, and weeded by holiness. (*2 Cor.* iv. 10.)

II. *That we may retain the grace of God.*—Divine grace is nourished by good works, as the fire is by the wood, the life by food, the lamp by oil. All these die out unless they are continuously replenished. (*Prov.* xxvi. 20.) The fire of divine grace should, by holiness, ever be kept alive upon the altar of the heart. (*Levit.* vi. 13.) The cry of the fruitless at the last will be (*Matt.* xxv. 8). The Jewish festival of *Xylophoria*, of carrying wood for sacred fire, was a type of what our whole lives ought to be.

III. *That God may be glorified.*—(*Isa.* xliii. 7.)—God created us, and endowed with many gifts both of mind and body, all of which He ordained to be used to His glory, which is His tribute. This glorification of God (*Rom.* xii. 1; *Ps.* l. 8, for 10, again 13.) We are not to die as infants, but in God's service, to (*1 Cor.* xvi. 13); that so we may (*2 Cor.* vi. 4-11). God is glorified by the sacrifice which we offer to Him of our will, affection, etc. (*Matt.* v. 14-17.)

IV. *That our joy may be full.*—(*John* xvi. 24).—A joy in what we gain, even by Divine grace for ourselves. Jacob valued that portion of land more than all his other possessions. (*Gen.* xlviii. 22). The struggle comes before the crown. (*2 Tim.* ii. 5.) Much toil and battle before Canaan was gained. Jacob first, and Israel, ‘God's prince,’ afterwards.

Epilogue.—Seek then to render to God His own.

SERMON 474.

THE THREE FALSE PROPHETS.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. II.)

“Beware of false prophets.”—*Matt. vii. 15.*

Introduction.—Undue intercourse and familiarity with the wicked is strongly condemned in Holy Scripture. (1 Cor. v. 9-12.) Familiarity with sinners leads to a participation in sin and its punishment. Sad friendship of Jehoshaphat and Ahab. (2 Chron. xix. 2; 1 Kings xxii. 2.) Hypocrites are the special sinners against whom this Gospel warns us; as represented by Satan, the prince of hypocrites and deceivers. Three classes of prophets in the Church; so there are three grades of false prophesying. We note the false prophets.

I. *Of the past. Satan.*—Satan in Paradise, persuading to sin (Gen. iii. 4, 5), because pleasure is a light sin, and God is infinitely merciful: as in the cases of David, Peter, Paul, the Magdalene, and Matthew. Amon imitated the wickedness of Manasseh, but God cut him off in two years. (2 Kings xxi. 23.) This prophet tells us—1) That we have in the Bible examples of sinners who were saved, to lead us to imitate their sin and not their repentance. 2) That sins are light. Wrong for—*a*) Heaven is strong (Job xxxvii. 18), yet it did not bear the weight of Lucifer's thought even. (Isa. xiv. 13.) *b*) The earth is solid and lasting (Eccles. i. 4), yet it trembled and swallowed up Korah, Dathan, etc. (Num. xvi. 32.) *c*) God is infinitely strong. (Heb. ii. 3.) See how He is pressed, as if fatigued by the sinner. (Jer. xxiii. 33.) 3) That God lightly punishes and soon pardons sin.

II. *Of the present. The World.*—The world laughs at holiness, and bids—1) the proud die in pride, despite (Dan. v. 22-30); 2) the covetous die in their unjust covetousness, despite (Ecclus. xli. 1); 3) the sensual die in their bodily pleasures. Despite (Gal. vi. 8) the world confirms in sin.

III. *Of the future. The Flesh.*—Eli represents this prophet, saying to one whom the Lord hath called, ‘Lie down again.’ (1 Sam. iii. 6.) Dionysius, of Syracuse, knew what cares lay under the purple.

Epilogue.—Of all these. (Lam. ii. 14.) Be warned against them.

SERMON 475.

THE HINDERANCES TO SALVATION.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. III.)

“Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.”—*Matt. vii. 18.*

Introduction.—We fear the lightning and thunder at which the lion roars; we ought rather to fear this fulmination of the Lord, ending, as it does, with ‘Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit,’ etc. These are words of warning to the sinner, that he may by repentance and grace be pardoned and purified, and may produce at length good fruit. The hinderances to the work of grace are five-fold.

I. *The habit of sin.*—Habit becomes after a time second nature, and seems too much a part of ourselves ever to be cast off. (*Jer. xiii. 23.*) Not as expressing an absolute impossibility, but only a great difficulty. Our native tongue or brogue cleaves to us throughout life. David did not fight in Saul’s armour. (*1 Sam. xvii. 39.*) The inveterate habit of laughter of the Tiryinthians. (*Athæ. Deep. lib. iv., sec. 79.*)

II. *The loss of character.*—This often hardens the soul, and prevents repentance; as in the case of Cain, in which the life was spared, but the reputation blasted. Joel’s lament. (*Joel i. 7.*) No ‘figs’ when the tree is cast away. Good report is the moral clothing of man, which, when it is lost, causes him to sink lower and lower amongst his fellows.

III. *Respect of persons.*—When men are placed before God. Belief becomes to such an almost impossible event. (*John v. 44.*) Rachel feigned infirmity and lied, in order to preserve the respect of her father Laban. (*Gen. xxxi. 35.*)

IV. *Undue love of the world.*—This is the birdlime of spiritual punishments. Sinner like the olive-tree, cannot make sacrifices for God. (*Judges ix. 9.*) A Christian once turned a Mohammedan, and cursed the day he did so; but when asked to return to Jesus Christ, he said, ‘I cannot, I cannot.’ The ties of life had bound him so closely to his new life, that he could not break them asunder.

V. *The snares of Satan.*—These sinners fall into from the loss of divine grace. Ahab was deceived by the false prophets. (*1 Kings xxii. 39.*) By every sin we set a fresh snare to entrap our own soul.

Epilogue.—Let nothing weigh with us to prevent us from becoming good trees: all these hinderances can be conquered.

SERMON 476.

THE TWO TREES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”—*Matt.* vii. 20.

Introduction.—It was a custom with ancient nations to plant a tree on their birthday. Our Blessed Lord used a very old similitude when He compared man to a tree. Nebuchadnezzar's dream. (*Dan.* iv. 10.) Righteous is so compared by David. (*Ps.* i. 3; xcii. 12.) So in the miracle. (*Mark* viii. 24.) ‘He whom Jesus Christ had healed, saw that there was a temporal plantation of the human shoots in this life.’ (*Chrysol.*) Two trees are mentioned in the Gospel for to-day, good and bad: signifying the real and the mere verbal Christian; which two classes are represented by the palm and the plane trees.

I. *The ‘good tree:’ the Palm.*—1) Its fruit does not appear amidst leaves, but at the naked top: the fruits of piety, patience, and mercy appear fastened to the naked branches of the Cross of Jesus, and not amongst the leaves of woods. 2) It grows in hot and arid places, as it were, scorning earthly pleasures (*Phil.* iii. 8); and seeking water as the soul seeks God. (*Ps.* lxiii. 1.) 3) It bears fruit the third year, which furnishes bread, wine, clothing, houses, wood and utensils. In the spiritual life there is—*a*) preparation; *b*) dedication and fruit. 4) Its fruit and flowers are of equal weight; and the Christian does what he says, performs that which he promises. 5) The vitality and fruit is at its head, not in its root; at its top it bears its valuable fruit. (*Cant.* vii. 8.) Holy souls have strength, and life, and fruit, not of the earth, but from their head.

II. *The ‘corrupt tree’ is the Plane.*—Useful only for its shade; bearing useless fruit, and leaves, and wood.

III. *The requirements of God.*—1) God loves fruit, not leaves; the fig-tree bears figs before leaves, hence its curse. (*Mark* xi. 13.) 2) Fruit spontaneously produced. (*Gen.* xix. 2; 2 *Sam.* ix. 1.) Each tree to produce its own particular fruit.

Epilogue.—Seek to be a fruitful tree (*James* ii. 18): a glory to God, a pleasure to man, a happiness to yourselves.

SERMON 477.

THE PROPHECIES OF DECEIT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“Beware of false prophets.”—*Matt. vii. 15.*

Introduction.—Men are often deceived by those who, making a fair show in the flesh, are wicked at heart; by wolves in sheep’s clothing; but more dangerous by far, are the prophecies of deceit, in which the devil speaks to the soul, instilling thoughts which seem to come from an angel of light. (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.) Such thoughts are Jeremiah’s prophets. (Lam. ii. 14.) Beware of false thoughts, of the insinuations of sin, of inward temptations to doubt and hardness of heart. They hinder repentance by bidding us believe in—

I. *Delay.*—That there is no need to repent now; many years are before us: only put off repentance to a to-morrow that never comes. Satan often gains his victory by delay; ere the battle can be fought, the time of fighting has passed by, and the wicked are cut off. (Ps. lv. 23.)

II. *In an easy return to holiness.*—That we can escape from sin when and how we please. It is not so; for sin is like a net or snare, most easy to fall into, but very hard to get out of. Like a broken glass or shell, exceedingly difficult to mend.

III. *That sin is not so dreadful as it is represented to be.*—That as David and Mary Magdalene were great sinners, and yet became great saints, sin cannot be so bad after all. We answer that—1) These were exceptional cases. 2) That they were given to teach us not to despair, not to lead us to presumption. (Joel ii. 14.)

IV. *That repentance may be worse for us in the end.*—That if we repent and fall back again, it were better never to have repented at all (Heb. vi. 4); which insinuation makes us more anxious about a hurt not yet received, than about one of which we are suffering now.

V. *That by some one great act we can atone for sin.*—If we are incapable of the smaller, how much more are we of the greater act of repentance?

Epilogue.—Guard against such prophecies, which are deadly.

SERMON 478.

THE GOOD TREE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit.”—*Matt.* vii. 17.

Introduction.—As trees yield small fruit when they are hedged in by thorns, so do Christians yield small fruits of holiness when they are encompassed by the thorns of sin. A tree has its top heavenwards; its root earthwards, and its branches midway; so man has his mind or head in heaven, his feet planted on earth, and his arms midway, so that his fruit may fall upon earth, ripened and multiplied by a heavenly sun. A good tree bears—

I. *Leaves.*—Leaves represent good will, which goes before good deeds, just as leaves go before fruit. They who have good thoughts without good deeds are like the fig-tree, full of leaves, but barren of fruit. (*Mark* xi. 10.) A certain broad-leaved, fruitful tree has its roots poisoned by a snake, when its leaves fall off; the husbandman seeing this perforates the tree on the top, pours in an antidote, and the leaves reappear. Satan is this snake; grace is the antidote to his work.

II. *Extended branches.*—Spiritual graces. The branch of —1) Knowledge; 2) compassion; 3) patience (*Luke* xxi. 19); 4) thanksgiving; 5) the desire of the Eternal Life; 6) the Divine bond of love. (1 *John* iv. 15.)

III. *Flowers.*—A good report among men. Such are like Aaron's rod. (*Num.* xvii. 8.) Jesus Christ comes in the morning, on the day of the resurrection, to see whether the rod of our earthly life has budded. Our lives and example should commend our faith.

IV. *Fruit.*—Good works; sweet as the fig; wholesome as the olive; joyful as wine. Jotham's Apologue. (*Judges* ix. 8-15.) The devil represents the trees: to whom the olive answers (*Ps.* lii. 8); the fig answers (*Habak.* iii. 17); the vine answers (*Zech.* viii. 12); so all temptations to serve and rule over the world, are left to the wicked, as to the bramble.

Epilogue.—Seek to be a tree worthy of the heavenly Husbandman; abounding in good desires, graces, loveliness, and good works.

SERMON 479.

THE FALSE PROPHET.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. VII.*)

“Beware of false prophets.”—*Matt. vii. 15.*

Introduction.—A most needful caution; there ever has been and ever will be false prophets in the world. In olden times they prophesied in Baal. (Jer. xxiii. 13, 16, 32.) Such was Hananiah who withstood Jeremiah. (Jer. xxviii. 10, 11, 13, 14.) Such were the prophets of Samaria who misled Ahab and abused Micaiah. (1 Kings xxii. 22, 23.) So in later times Theudas, and Judas of Galilee. (Acts v. 36, 37.) Simon Magus (Acts viii. 18). So the Lord predicted (Matt. xxiv. 24). Afterwards Mahomet, and the false teachers of every age. We note—

I. *The imposture.*—They ‘come in sheep’s clothing:’ in the garb of—1) innocence; 2) weakness; 3) and gentleness, bearing the garb of piety, seeking to draw others to their errors and to destroy souls. They are fluent, having the words of Holy Scripture in their mouths, which they wrongly expound to suit their own views, they mingle grain with a hidden snare; wine and honey they mingle with their poison. Such are heretics and schismatics (Rom. xvi. 17, 18; 2 Pet. iii. 16); they quote Scripture like Satan. (Matt. iv. 6.)

II. *Its detection.*—‘Know them by their fruits,’ which are inspiredly described. (2 Tim. iii. 1-8.) 1) ‘Deniers’ of supernatural grace; 2) of the delegated powers of Jesus Jesus Christ; 3) of the visible kingdom of Jesus Christ.

III. *Its punishment.*—‘Hewn down and cast into the fire.’ Man is as a tree planted in the garden of the Lord to bring forth good fruit; he is cut down by the axe of death, and cast into Gehenna. Such are like the barren fig-tree. (Mark xi. 13-20.) The heretic is either sterile, or he produces the bitter fruit of dissensions and schisms. (Jude 3, 4.)

Epilogue.—Avoid the leaven of these false prophets and their sad doom.

SERMON 480.**THE TREE OF THE CHURCH.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)**

Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."—*Matt.* vii. 17.

Introduction.—Some trees are like the Upas, and shed a poisonous air around them, blighting and killing all vegetation and life within their influence. The sinner is such a tree as this; he sheds a noxious vapour wherever he goes. The Church of Jesus Christ is the 'good tree,' bearing the elect souls as fruit. We note—

I. *The similes of this Tree.*—1) The ark of Noah. (Jerome.) 2) The house of Rahab. (Aug.) 3) The army with banners (Cant. vi. 10), as going forth to conquer through order and discipline. 4) The body and members. (Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. x. 17.) As one function out of order disarranges the whole body, so does one evil member hurt the Church.

II. *The complaint of this Tree.*—1) Of loss of peace (Isa. xxxviii. 17); great bitterness under—*a*) tyrants; *b*) heresiarchs; *c*) unfaithfulness of schismatic children. 2) Of loss of beauty. (Cant. i. 5.) 'Black' to sinners, 'comely' to saints. Once white altogether: the wickedness of my children have weakened me, and injured my beauty. I am black with the smoke of sins. 3) Of loss of heavenly glory. The Church once was heavenly, and now she only holds the vestiges of former things, and so she pleads over her spiritual robbery. (Ps. xxxv. 1-4.) She will accuse her wicked children in the Judgment. 4) Of loss of earthly estate; of earnest, obedient children; of the holy and powerful influence she once held in the world.

Epilogue.—O senseless sinner! how do you answer these complaints and accusations? Are they mere figures of speech. There cometh a time. (Acts iii. 21.) Let not your fruit be for burning, but be good fruit fit for heaven.

SERMON 481.

THE WORD OF WARNING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Beware of false prophets.”—*Matt. vii. 15.*

Introduction.—The enemies of our salvation are so many and so varied, that the highest prudence is needful in order to escape from them. The Lord in this Gospel instructs us on this point, proposing—1) An instruction of premonition: ‘Beware.’ 2) A declaration of instruction; ‘Do men gather?’ 3) The conclusion of the declaration: ‘Every tree.’ The gate of heaven is narrow, and they are many who turn aside from the path which leads thither; hence the need of this instruction of premonition. In which we note—

I. *The exhortation itself.*—We are exhorted to avoid the deception: ‘Beware’ more diligently, observe more cautiously, that ye be not seduced, circumvented, and deceived. (Orig.) ‘When an event is surely known, it can be regarded with simplicity; but when it is uncertain, it must be carefully considered.’ (Chrysos.) Some uncertainty belongs to all spiritual things in this world; so they demand to be viewed—1) Thoughtfully and carefully; 2) earnestly; 3) prayerfully. Then will the eyes of the spiritual understanding be opened to any deceit.

II. *The reason of the exhortation.*—‘Which come in sheep’s clothing,’ being other than they seem; false Christians; corruptors, not guardians, of the flock of Jesus Christ.—1) Heretics, who pick, choose, and tamper with the articles of faith. (Acts xx. 29.) 2) Flatterers. (Isa. iii. 12; Ezek. xiii. 10.) To build a wall is to obstruct sin; ‘untempered mortar’ is flattery, and vain promises and professions. 3) Hypocrites. Hypocrisy crushes out goodness; it being sin, under the form of goodness.

III. *The declaration of the understanding and of the reason.*—‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’ False prophets are difficult to be known at first; words and works are the true revealers of the hidden snare of the heart.

Epilogue.—Try to estimate all things at their true value in God’s sight.

SERMON 482.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“Beware of false prophets . . . which is in heaven.”—*Matt.* vii. 15-22.

Introduction.—This Gospel is most suitable for this season, in which we are beginning to gather in our summer fruits. We think more of our own than of the Lord's harvest. Hence no complaint. (*Micah* vii. 1.) We are taught to-day, that whilst we gather in the food of God's bounty, we ought to render to Him some offering in return. ‘Not every one,’ etc. To do this let us learn—

I. *Why heresy is to be shunned.*—1) It is a most grievous sin, drawing many others after it, especially that obstinacy which leads to a contempt of Holy Scriptures, of the Church, her Sacraments and traditions; and the doing this destroys hope and charity, and the means of rising from sin. S. Paul calls it sin (2 *Tim.* ii. 19; *Titus* iii. 10, 11.) Others are sins of infirmity and weakness; this is one of pertinacity. 2) It is an evil contagion. (2 *Tim.* ii. 16, 17.) Heresy asserts new and curious dogmas which are pleasing to the flesh. Heretics. (1 *John* iv. 5.) 3) It is a subtle and clandestine evil, being spiritual and only to be discerned in its fruits and effects.

II. *By what fruits false prophets are known.*—1) By new doctrines as opposed to old teaching. 2) Evil deeds in contempt of the old paths; denial of the means of grace. 3) Inflation with every form of ignorance and spiritual pride.

III. *Each tree bears its proper fruit.*—Of men it is true as a principle, but it admits of a slight exception in practice. A good Christian, of consistent life, could but bear good fruit. (*Gen.* xxxix. 9; *Jer.* xiii. 23.)

IV. *Why God requires good fruit of us.*—1) That we may root out sin. 2) That we may retain grace. 3) That we may glorify God. For the remaining reasons see Sermon 473.

SERMON 483.

THE SIGNS OF SALVATION.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”—1 Cor. x. 12.

Introduction.—Not ‘him that standeth,’ but ‘him that thinketh he standeth.’ General uncertainty of life: next of all the uncertainty of the eternal state—question most momentous, yet most uncertain. Who was the devil of the chosen Apostles? (John vi. 70; Eccles. ix. 1.) We know we sin; is our sin pardoned? The iron of sin has entered into the soul, inflicting a mortal wound; is the wound healed? No certainty of final perseverance; yet it is well for us to apply three tests by which we may in some degree gauge our assurance of salvation.

I. *The disposition of the interior appetite.*—Does the soul relish what it ought to do; does it despise what it should do? Where are the affections placed? Whither do the hopes and desires tend? Can the soul willingly accept chastisement? (Heb. xii. 11.) Are we cheerful under affliction? (2 Cor. iv. 17.) 1) Desire, heavenly or earthly. 2) Resignation. 3) Contentment; three notes of the spiritual life.

II. *The power of resisting sin.*—Have I for a long time overcome my easily-besetting sin? Have I a strength in temptation which is not of man, but of the grace of God? Interior strength is a token of interior grace; which—1) Resists; 2) sustains; 3) waxes valiant in fight.

III. *The peace and quietness of soul.*—Has a sense of pardoned sin removed all bitterness and remorse of conscience? Have I the answer of a good conscience towards God? No peace to the wicked. (Isa. lvii. 21.) A peace which is—1) Deep; 2) lasting; 3) well grounded.

Epilogue.—As bread is to the taste of healthy, and as light is to the strong eye, so are heavenly things to the sound in heart and soul, in which dwells the ever-blessed Trinity. The Son gives us wisdom, the Father strength, the Holy Ghost quietness and peace. (1 John v. 7.) The ‘heaven’ is the holy soul, and the presence in it of the Trinity is a token of its standing, state, and probable final condition.

SERMON 484.

FALLING INTO SIN.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”—1 *Cor.* x. 12.

Introduction.—The true servant of God stands very high (Isa. lii. 13), being exalted by—1) Knowledge. (1 John ii. 20.) ‘Unction’ is clearness of the understanding. 2) Nobility of race. (Matt. xii. 50.) 3) Riches. (Ps. cxii. 1-3.) 4) Power. (Phil. iv. 13.) From this high state of Christian perfection we are apt to fall by four causes.

I. *Diabolical temptation.*—This cannot force the freedom of the will, but it confounds the soul by its sudden impetuosity. David, a tower of holiness, was blown down by the wind of lust. (2 Sam. xi. 2; Ps. cxviii. 13, 14.) Hence the constant need of watchfulness and prayer. (Matt. xxvi. 41.)

II. *Familiar affection.*—When we break down those rules by which religion and morality have divided the sexes, walking with undue familiarity in our intercourse, or allowing our affection for our friends to lead us to become partakers in their sins.

III. *Pleasing conversation.*—When following holiness we want to partake of the pleasures of the world to their fullest extent, and yet to be sinless. Such tempters. (Lam. iv. 18.) Our remedy is (Rom. xiii. 14). When the burden of repentance has proved too heavy, it is to be put away for a short season, and then taken up again. For (Eph. v. 29).

IV. *Neglect of good works.*—Spiritual devotion, prayers, and all the other penitential helps which sustain the soul in the height of divine grace, cannot be given up without a fall: then it is true of us (John xviii. 6). In prophecy our Blessed Lord says (2 Kings iv. 29). With ungirt loins, the robe is defiled with the clay of earth. The staff, is the Cross, which helps us in our failings, weaknesses, and wanderings. Our hardships, fastings, scornings, woundings, are as nothing when compared with those of Jesus Christ.

Epilogue.—O fall not into the depth and abyss of sin! ‘Take heed’ to these four special forms of temptation. Rest in no fancied security at any time, but ever ‘watch and pray.’

SERMON 485.

THE VALUE OF A GOOD NAME.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. I.)

“There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him.”—*Luke xvi. 1.*

Introduction.—I can feel from my heart for thee, O most wretched steward, since having lost thy good name with thy master, thou hast lost all. ‘*Omnia si perdas, famam servare memento; Perdita si fama est, perditur omne bonum.*’ (Ovid.) They easily labour with want, who labour under a bad name. Caius Cæsar deprived a Prefect aged ninety of his office that he might end his days in peace. The old man hung his palace in black, and laid himself out on the funereal couch as if dead; feeling a stain cast upon his good name. Cæsar learning this, restored him. ‘The Lord commended the unjust steward,’ not for acting unjustly, but for his prudence in preserving a good name with his neighbours. A good name—

I. *Is like the bark of a tree.*—Which protects and preserves all the interior parts. Loss of a good name was the ruin of Judah. (Joel i. 7.) As we fear to stain expensive clothes, so should we fear to injure our good name.

II. *Was cared for by Jesus Christ.*—Hence He was born of one espoused; educated at Nazareth; suffered Himself to be called the Son of Joseph. ‘Lest there should be a veil of excuse to virgins, because the Mother of the Lord had been tainted with reproach.’ (S. Pasca.) Hence a ‘lily.’ (Cant. ii. 1, 2, 16.) Hence the question (Matt. xvi. 12), teaching us to be mindful of evil report, and to be careful to protect a good name.

III. *Is preserved by all right-minded men.*—It is the first care of an able man to protect his good name. (Senec.) Note Job (xxx. 7); Moses (Num. xvi. 15); Samuel (1 Sam. xii. 5), etc. The Lord wept over Jerusalem (Luke xix. 41), as David over Abner (2 Sam. iii. 32); lest He should seem to rejoice over destruction and misery. Note the Lord’s command (Matt. v. 15); and S. Paul’s (1 Thess. i. v). The prohibitions (Lev. xi. 3, 4, etc.) to give the Israelites a good name, for the forbidden beasts typified certain vices: ‘hare,’ worldly fear; ‘cony,’ covetousness.

IV. *It draws souls to Jesus Christ.*—(2 Cor. ii. 15; Eccles. vii. 23).

Epilogue.—Preserve a good name—1) Honestly; 2) carefully; 3) holily.

SERMON 486.

MAN'S WORK IN TIME.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“What shall I do? for my Lord taketh away from me the stewardship.”—
Luke xvi. 3.

Introduction.—There is no work to be done after this life. (John ix. 4.) Solemn question. (Job xxxi. 14.) None can escape God's hand. (Ps. cxxxix. 7.) In this life each one ought to perform a fourfold work.

I. *Examining his position.*—‘What shall I do?’ (Ecclus. xviii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 31.) Reason ought to call the soul as under guilt to judgment; thought to accuse: conscience to furnish testimony; fear as an executioner to torture and to kill from the former conversation of sin. (Aug.)

II. *Diligently labouring.*—Recognizing his impotency: ‘I cannot dig.’ Man must either beg or labour. (Prov. vi. 6-9.)
a) The ant in summer collects grain; we collect our works in life. *b)* Perforates it, to stop germination; so we use the soul. (Heb. iv. 12.) Staying growth (Heb. xii. 15; Ps. cxix. 11.)
c) Peels it; so thought cleansed from husk of sin. Jesus Christ is fed ‘amongst lilies.’ (Cant. ii. 16; Jer. xv. 19.) *d)* Dries it; moisture of sin is dried by the heat of the true sun. (Isa. liii. 2.) Dryer in life. (Ps. xxii. 15; cii. 3.)

III. *Discreetly providing.*—‘I am resolved what to do.’ Using almsgiving for—*a)* This life (2 Cor. ix. 6.) *b)* Death; ‘almsgiving associates the mind with God.’ (Amb.) *c)* After death. (Tobit iv. 11; Prov. xiii. 8.)

IV. *Gaining the Lord's commendation.*—‘The Lord commended,’ etc. Not for the fraud, but for the forethought and wisdom; which is threefold—1) Evil (Rom. viii. 5) opposed to the wisdom of (James iii. 17); one with that other wisdom (James iii. 15), earthly, covetous, sensual, luxurious, ‘devilish,’ proud. 2) superfluous; does not regard salvation or man's highest life (Rom. i. 22); a wisdom of the worldly wise; of philosophy, etc. Hence opposed to Christian wisdom (1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.) 3) Needful wisdom for salvation, growth in grace; a Divine wisdom, consisting in the knowledge of God. (Jer. ix. 24.) In this wisdom the children of light are more prudent than the children of this world; being spiritually taught. (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

Epilogue.—So endeavour to gain an eternal blessing from a temporal stewardship.

SERMON 487.

FORETHOUGHT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)“What shall I do?”—*Luke xvi. 3.*

Introduction.—The stewardship was not as yet taken away; a provision was being made against the evil day; against the time when the steward would be left penniless and helpless. We all have to provide against two far more awful days than this; the days of death and of judgment. Well may we ask the question: ‘What shall I do?’ This question implies three considerations.

I. *The withdrawal of means.*—‘My Lord taketh away from me the stewardship;’ then shall I be left naked, powerless, and friendless. 1) Naked of all my present helps, money, time, opportunity. 2) Powerless, the day of action over, neither repentance, reparation, nor amendment possible. 3) Friendless: all my old friends, who came about me in prosperity, gone for ever. Ask with Job (*Job xxxi. 14*). ‘I cannot dig;’ no satisfaction in labour now; ‘to beg I am ashamed;’ the time for prayer has passed by. No hope in a future when the present life has been wasted. The foolish virgins lost their day and opportunity.

II. *The possibility of action.*—This involves—1) Thought; 2) action; 3) patient waiting. ‘I am resolved what to do.’ Before the stewardship be taken away by death, viz., to make everlasting friends. The rich have homes on earth, the poor in heaven; I will give earthly homes to the poor and they will procure me a heavenly home. ‘Provide an earthly and receive a heavenly home.’ (*Aug.*) Give of the oil of compassion and of the wheat of help; more oil than wheat, for we can furnish longer measures of compassion than of help. It is possible in time, to provide for eternity; this life holds eternal issues. ‘What shall I do?’ Use every means of grace; waste none of God’s opportunities.

III. *The application of the example.*—As the steward provided by forethought against the evil day, so may we if we will; he was not left wretched and helpless. A bishop wept on seeing a decked out woman at Alexandria: firstly, for her own sake; and secondly, when he thought how she cared to propitiate men, and was so careless about God.

Epilogue.—Ask this question, and act upon God’s answer to it.

SERMON 488.

UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“The mammon of unrighteousness.”—*Luke xvi. 9.*

Introduction.—A brother hermit once brought into the cell of S. Hilarion a bundle of green chick-pea from his garden, which the rules of the order did not allow to be cultivated. S. Hilarion discovering them by their odour, bade them be given to the cattle, who, on sight of them, with a loud lowing ran away. Jesus Christ by the odour detects the mammon of unrighteousness in riches, and proves their valuelessness by calling them mammon. Riches are not evil then in themselves, yet they have a very bad name. For—

I. *They are often gotten unjustly.*—This is especially true of great wealth; for the gain of one is necessarily the loss of another; hence avarice is called ‘the mother of calamity.’ No inequalities in fortune were permitted in the beginning of the world.

II. *They often make men unjust.*—They become instruments of wickedness. (*James ii. 7.*) They lead—1) To oppression of the poor; 2) to the indulgence of unworthy tastes and appetites; 3) to unholy disputes and quarrels; as between Lot and Abraham. (*Gen. xiii. 7.*) Aaron’s calf a type of mammon worship, and it was to be burned. (*Exod. xxxii. 20.*)

III. *They often hurt others.*—The rich, like the Upas and other noxious trees, overshadow others with their covetous influence; like large trees, they draw the moisture and substance from others. (*Jer. xii. 12.*) So Naboth grieved. (*1 Kings xxi. 3.*)

IV. *They hinder the work of Divine grace.*—The Reubenites and Gadites, because of their riches, could not go on and pass over Jordan. (*Num. xxxii. 1-6.*) Many rich Jews did not want to return from Babylon to Jerusalem, after the captivity. Riches deprive the soul of energy, by filling it with an empty satisfaction.

V. *They are deceitful and untrustworthy.*—Our Blessed Lord compares them to thorns. (*Matt. xiii. 22.*) They pierce the hands of those who seek to lay hold of them. As they are soon burned and are hated by the husbandman, so will God burn them, and so does He hate them. When most wanted, in sorrow, and disease, and death, they are of no avail.

Epilogue.—Let us imitate the Babytaceans (*Pliny vi. 27*), who cast their gold away, and burned it, to avoid temptation.

SERMON 489.

UNJUST DEALING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“The Lord commended the unjust steward.”—*Luke* xvi. 8.

Introduction.—Waste of another's goods is a simple robbery ; as also is all unjust dealing, in its most innocent form. It seems as if the Lord commended this in the Gospel. Yet not so, He only commended the steward's prudence and forethought, but He punished him still with the loss of his situation. We note of unjust dealing—

I. *The gravity of the sin.*—1) It is opposed to the law of nature ; to the doing unto others, etc. It does a cruel wrong, not only to the injured person, but to the injurer also ; its after action is as great as its direct. 2) It is forbidden by the old law. (*Exod.* xxii. 1 ; *Levit.* xix. 13.) If unable to make restitution, the offender is to be sold up. 3) It is forbidden by the new law. Jesus Christ (*Luke* vi. 20) most bitterly condemns any species of unjust dealing. The rich man was found in hell for simply neglecting even, not for defrauding Lazarus. (*Luke* xvi. 23.) So also (1 *Thess.* iv. 6) the smallest undue advantage is not allowed to be taken. A saw of Pythagoras : ‘ Take not food with thy left hand.’

II. *The disquieting of the conscience.*—The conscience never allows the unjust to be at peace. As the Bird of Paradise so longs for its liberty, that it never ceases to lament until restored to liberty, so does the unjust dealer long to be innocent ; to make restitution ; pricked in conscience, he is ever saying, ‘ What shall I do ?’

III. *The valuelessness of ill-gotten gains.*—(*Prov.* x. 2.—Such gains never carry a blessing with them. Such (*Prov.* xi. 24). So (*Ecclus.* xl. 13). Number of Egyptian plagues correspond to the Decalogue. Seventh plague, hail ; not steal. (*Aug.*)

IV. *It brings great danger.*—1) Of final loss ; if not of the unjust possessions themselves, yet still of honesty of truth, of inward peace. 2) Of temporal punishment ; by way of the judgment always hanging over the head. 3) Of falling into more unjust dealings, and so of going on from sin to sin.

Epilogue.—Let us preserve the conscience from the burden of unjust dealing.

SERMON 490.

WORLDLY WORKERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.”—*Luke* xvi. 8.

Introduction.—It is a preposterous thing, and most worthy of tears, that Christians should be so laborious in temporal, and yet so sluggish in all that concerns eternal matters: so Argus-eyed as to bodily things, and so mole-like as to all that affects the immortal soul. Men care far more for the body than they do for the soul. This steward spent many a sleepless night devising the means to defraud his lord; to gain friends for himself of his creditors. Such efforts, rightly directed, would have been of lasting service to him: such fidelity and diligence in his master's service would have earned a great reward. There are more sinners who are labouring for hell, than holy souls who are working for righteousness. Those workers of the world who are so wise in their generation, toil—

I. *Carelessly.*—A deadly conflict with sin is ever being waged by the Christian in this life. (*Eph.* vi. 12.) Jacob put Rachel and Joseph hindermost, as being dearest to him. (*Gen.* xxxiii. 2.) Worldly workers put their souls in the front, exposing them to—1) surest, 2) nearest, 3) and deadliest struggle with the enemy.

II. *Uselessly.*—The magicians strive to resist the force of Moses's miracles, fetching water from Goshen, for there was no water in Egypt. (*Exod.* vii. 20.)

III. *Wickedly.*—Like the prodigal. (*Luke* xv. 13.) Like Herod and Herodias. (*Mark* vi. 23.) Like Ahasuerus and Esther. (*Eph.* vii. 2.) For a carnal love, willing to do or to give so much; for an enduring reward, willing to make neither effort nor sacrifice.

IV.—*Untiringly.*—In the pursuit of riches, honours, knowledge, etc., all of which will one day perish. Pambos wept for the actress of Alexandria—1) for her soul; 2) to think how hard she worked for Satan, and how little he had done for God. (*Soc.* iv. c. xxiii.)

Epilogue.—Such wise ones are at last the martyrs and the victims of the devil.

SERMON 491.

THE GOOD MASTER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)“There was a certain rich man which had a steward.”—*Luke* xvi. 1.

Introduction.—There is much matter, both for instruction and also for imitation, in the conduct of this rich man towards his unfaithful servant; for he was a good master, and may teach us many a lesson of mildness and gentleness in our dealings with others. He was—

I. *Slow to condemn.*—He did not condemn the steward unheard: ‘How is it that I hear this of thee?’ We ought readily to believe all the good, and to distrust all the evil which we hear of others. ‘He that is hasty to give credit, is light of heart.’ (*Ecclus.* xix. 4.) God did not believe in the wickedness of Pentapolis till He came down and saw it. (*Gen.* xviii. 21.) Mere report even of the truthful sinless angels was not sufficient for God. (1 *John* iv. 1.)

II. *Diligent to examine.*—The accusation being laid before him, he was bound to take some notice of it, and that he did with—1) care; 2) without loss of time. Negligence and idleness are the cause of poverty, both temporal and spiritual. (*Prov.* xxiii. 21; *Eccles.* x. 18.) This idleness caused the death of the synagogue. (*Isa.* i. 6.) Unless the accounts and the condition of the soul be diligently examined, ruin will fall upon it unknown and unthought of; it will have been wasted, without any misgivings.

III. *Candid to praise.*—As the bee rejects what is worthless and seizes upon the sweetness of the flower, so doth this master praise what was worthy of praise in his servant, even against himself. Many see all the bad, and never recognise the good in anything. Such, in a decaying apple, eat the rotten and reject the whole portions of it. Many rather resemble the hornet than the bee.

IV. *Forgiveness of the theft.*—The good master, being merciful, allowed of the steward’s mercy to others. (*Micah* iii. 2, 3.) ‘This is a generation.’ (*Prov.* xxx. 14.)

Epilogue.—So acting for others as for ourselves, we shall gain much happiness, and meet with the approval of God.

SERMON 492.

THE FINAL ACCOUNT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“Give an account of thy stewardship.”—*Luke xvi. 2.*

Introduction.—An unjust master condemns without any hearing, as Potiphar treated Joseph. (*Gen. xxxix. 2.*) A just and good master—1) Takes account; 2) gives a certain delay; 3) punishes the guilty only. The devil had accused man to God. Jesus Christ came into the world that He might take a due account of our works, and act like a good master. Hereafter a final account will be taken of us; of our use or abuse of God’s gifts.

I. *Of nature.*—1) Of the body; of its health, strength, and beauty. Absalom miserably wasted his beauty; Samson his strength. Fable: A woman besought the gods for her as yet unborn offspring; one promised strength, another promised beauty, a third the fulness of power. She asked for immortality; and this being refused, she begged them to turn their blessings into curses, and her child was born a monster. The mind is this child, which has many blessings, but yet lacks immortality in this world.

II. *Of grace.*—Of wisdom, understanding. (1 Cor. xii. 7-12.) Wisdom to Solomon; grace to S. Paul. (1 Cor. xv. 10.) This is the best gift of all. (2 Cor. iii. 5.) Hence David’s charge to Solomon. (1 Chron. xxii. 19; *Gen. viii. 8-13.*) The Holy Ghost is this dove. (*John i. 32-34.*) He rests here and there upon a holy soul, and when the waters of sin abound, he returns again to heaven.

III. *Of temporal blessings.*—Riches, honours, lands, possessions, etc., all of which are to be rightly spent. Nabal refused his Lord David, who was going to kill him in consequence of this. (1 Sam. xxv. 10-14.) Every one who denies the poor and needy denies the Lord (*Matt. xxv. 40*); and is a spiritual Nabal.

IV. *Of glory.*—Promised to us. (*Ps. xxvii. 13.*) Joseph ringing food to his brethren, is ill-treated by them (*Gen. xxxvii. 14*); but on their humbling themselves he forgave them, and allowed them to share his Egyptian prosperity. So will Jesus Christ forgive us our ingratitude, and share heaven with us.

Epilogue.—Take for thyself an account of these things now.

SERMON 493.

THE WISDOM OF THE FLESH.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IX.)

“The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”—*Luke* xvi. 8.

Introduction.—In the ancient fable, the spider complains to the silkworm, that he spends his substance and energy in weaving a marvellous web, by means of which he hardly obtains food, and which often one rude touch of the hand destroys in a moment, whilst a silkworm is preserved, and fed, and its web is never spun in vain. True, says the silkworm, but you catch flies, whilst I take kings and clothe them in my garments. ‘The children of this world’ are like the spiders, who weave the web of temporal gain; ‘the children of light’ are like the silkworms, who work for the King of kings, and for a high reward, which is now out of sight. The children of this world are wise in their generation. For—

I. *They prefer the present to the future.*—They choose temporal rather than eternal things, having neither faith nor hope. Heathen philosophers defined prudence to be the virtue which enables us to gain temporal blessings, and to avoid temporal evils. No really wise soul could prefer earth to heaven; this state of sin and suffering to a life of glory and immortality.

II. *They look to present gain, not to possible ill.*—Very acute for present advantage; blind to the evil that may result. Like the stag, who felt secure in feeding if she kept her blind eye to the sea; forgetful that the hunters would take a boat and attack her weakest point. Like Pharaoh, who looked at the spoil but not on his own destruction. (*Exod.* xv. 9.) Like Balaam, who prophesied evil of the Israelites that would take centuries to fulfil, and thought not of his own impending death. (*Num.* xxiv. ; xxxi. 8.) Like the artificers who helped Noah, but would not enter the ark with him.

III. *They are unscrupulous in their use of means.*—The end is all their aim, let it be attained by honest or dishonest means. Like Jeroboam, who introduced idolatry to wean his people from Jerusalem (*1 Kings* xii. 28); but by idolatry he was overthrown.

IV. *They prefer the flesh to the spirit.*—Things eternal to inward honours, riches, and the grace of God. (*Deut.* xxi. 15-18.) ‘Hated’ the spirit and holiness, ‘he loved’ the flesh. Works of spirit, works of strength, of endurance, of eternal reward. ‘The right hand’ (*Rev.* v. 7) of inward and spiritual blessings:

Epilogue.—Note the infinite loss suggested by these courses.

SERMON 494.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“There was a certain rich man . . . everlasting habitations.”—
Luke xvi. 1-10.

Introduction.—‘What shall I do?’ A question which is asked in many senses. What shall I learn? or say? or appear? or believe? Asked by publicans, and soldiers, and people (*Luke iii. 10, 12, 14*); by the stricken consciences at Pentecost (*Acts ii. 37*); by Saul (*Acts ix. 6*). In part, the lessons of this Gospel answer this question.

I. *The rich learn.*—1) That they are stewards not lords of their inheritance: for—*a*) they are called stewards; *b*) God will take a reckoning of them; *c*) they hold their possessions at God’s pleasure (*Lev. xxv. 23*); was to teach the Israelites this lesson. Hence no one ought unduly—*a*) To seek for riches; or, *b*) to be very careless distributors of them. 2) To rightly spend their riches, by them building such a tower as will stand secure in the future Judgment of Deluge. So (*Ps. xli. 1*; *cxii. 5-8*). Jesus Christ taught the rich by the manure of their wealth to fertilize the fields, the hearts of the poor. 3) The manner of bestowing alms. *a*) Call the poor and give to them; *b*) to give at once, ‘qui cito dat bis dat;’ *c*) to give to many, ‘every one;’ *d*) to give largely, one a half, another a fifth; *e*) to give with discretion.

II. *The poor learn.*—1) To dig rather than to beg, and to beg rather than to steal. The steward thought of digging and begging, and he fell back upon fraud. 2) To live holily and to pray for benefactors so as to gain eternal habitations.

III. *Masters learn.*—1) To proceed gently to condemnation. God came down to see the Ark building (*Gen. vii. 5*); and the tower building (*Gen. xi. 7*); and the wickedness of Sodom. (*Gen. xviii. 21.*) 2) Not to use harsh words. ‘How is it?’ David to Mephibosheth. (*2 Sam. xix. 25.*)

IV. *Subordinates learn.*—1) Not to defraud their masters; 2) nor to be the participants in any such fraud.

V. *All men learn.*—1) To act prudently; 2) to be reconciled with God; 3) that they will have to give an account; 4) that prodigality comes to an end.

SERMON 495.

SPIRITUAL LIFE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."—

1 Cor. xii. 7.

Introduction.—'Manifestation' implies presence, a presence working and active. What the soul or spirit is to the body, giving it life, that the Holy Spirit is to the soul, giving it its life. As there is ever life in the body whilst it lives, by which the presence of the soul can be assured, so there is always life in those in whom is the Holy Ghost, by which His Blessed Presence can be traced. In the article of death the signs of breath are noted, and whilst life remains the dying are tended; when the spirit has fled, the body is deserted and is buried. So the sinner is to be tended whilst any spiritual life remains in him; and is to be mourned over when spiritual death hinders the exercise of Christian love and friendship. The signs of the spiritual life are—

I. *The spiritual sense.*—Whilst the body has life its senses are keen as to sickness and health, pleasure and pain. A mortified member of the body feels nothing. The dead soul has no sense of sin committed; neither the sorrow of repentance, nor the hope of pardon. The body is insensible without life; the soul is insensible without the Spirit of grace. (Prov. xxiii. 35.)

II. *The motion of members.*—Bodily life gives us power over our bodily members. When the motions of the soul are used to excite the body to holy deeds, this is a true sign of the sign of spiritual life; the feet are kept from walking into sin, and the covetous hands are opened to the giving of alms, etc.

III. *Spiritual attraction.*—Seen when the presence of the Holy Ghost is drawn against the fervour of sin; when He is attracted to the soul to bless it with His manifold gifts; and when the indwelling presence lifts the soul above sin and sorrow.

Epilogue.—With sorrow for past sin; with earnest amendment of life; with manifestation of grace; there can be no doubt of the presence of Spiritual Life. Those who are spiritually dead, we must mourn, bury, and pray for.

SERMON 496.

WISDOM.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“To one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom.”—1 *Cor.* xii. 8.

Introduction.—Wisdom the daughter of experience, and memory is gained by practice and experience as well as from books. Memory enables us to gather up the lessons of the past, all its several experiences, that so we may become wise. Divine wisdom—the word of wisdom—the faculty of expounding the highest wisdom—is a gift of the Spirit, the daughter of a holy life and of contemplation. The ‘word of wisdom’ in the heart, produces three effects upon the soul.

I. *It raises it to God.*—It abstracts the mind from lower things, and exalts it by the enkindled desire for the Divine love. As the clear æther is easily illumined by the brightness of the sun, so does the mind, cleansed from earthly things, receive most easily the light of the word of wisdom. (Job. vii. 15.) ‘Strangling,’ or suspension, the spiritual death of sin is chosen, which is really life and of wisdom. So of Joseph would Jacob say. (Gen. xlv. 30.)

II. *It clothes it with the Divine likeness.*—The gift of the ‘word of wisdom,’ transforms the soul to the Divine likeness. (Isa. lxi. 10.) It is a ‘garment of salvation,’ and a ‘robe of righteousness,’ hiding all imperfections of the old nature; an earnest of future happiness and glory; a pledge of present security.

III. *It unites it wholly with God.*—The ‘word of wisdom’ conforms the will of man wholly to the will of God, so that man desires only that which is well pleasing to God. Hence (1 *Cor.* vi. 17). Not that the created spirit flows essentially into the Divine nature, but because a union is formed by a true and full conformity of desire and love, which firmly unites the soul to God. (Ps. lxxiii. 28.)

Epilogue.—‘The word of wisdom’ consists of—1) An object by which the soul is fixed upon proper things; 2) power, by which all its faculties are turned to God; 3) spiritual light, by which the mysteries of God are searched out and revealed.

SERMON 497.

HOLY TEARS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)“He beheld the city, and wept over it.”—*Luke* xix. 41.

Introduction.—Some tears are the unburthening of a heart that is overcharged with anger, disappointment, or despair. These shed by the Lord were holy tears, which flow from love, and which quicken love in the soul. Such tears are of three kinds.

I. *Of compunction.*—(Ps. vi. 6; xlii. 2.)—They are the lavatory in which the soul is cleansed. (*Luke* vii. 38-47.) As letters are washed out by water from a slate or from ivory tablets, so the letters of sin, or the sentence of death on the soul, is washed out by tears, which drown Satan and his hosts in the Red Sea of repentance (*Exod.* xiv. 27), and quench the flame of his suggestions. As water saves the burning house, so do tears the house of the conscience, when it is burning with the fire of temptation.

II. *Of compassion.*—(*Job* xxx. 25.)—For the troubled and the poor. Samuel for Saul. (*1 Sam.* xv. 35; *Rom.* xii. 15.) We ought to weep over the Passion of the Lord. ‘He is no member of that holy body, who sheds no tears over the stricken Head.’ (Bern.) Such tears unite us with the Son of Man, and with the whole family of man through Him.

III. *Of devotion.*—Tears of devotion flow—1) From the absence of Divine sweetness. (*John* xx. 11.) Such tears convert the fervour of love into a secret prayer, and vex the devil. Many, alas! bathe him in a bath of uncleanness, formed of wicked thoughts. (*Job* xl. 21.) 2) From the injury which sin does to the Divine Majesty. Hence the disciples wept over the Passion. (*John* xvi. 20.) 3) From an ardent longing for our heavenly home, for the more the thoughts of that city affect the soul, the more copious and violent are the tears. (Ps. cxx. 5; cxxxvii. 1.)

Epilogue.—How sweet is this weeping. O good Jesu, if it be sweet to weep with Thee, what joy to rejoice with Thee.

SERMON 498.

THE FOUR CITIES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“When He was come near He beheld the city.”—*Luke* xix. 41.

Introduction.—Wonderful place, this city of Jerusalem; the dwelling-place of man and of God; an allegory also and type of the city of God above. There are four cities which encompass man at one time or other of his being, in three of which he is constrained to dwell.

I. *The City of the World.*—(Ps. lv. 9-11.)—Full of iniquity and deceit. Jericho, or the moon, is a type of it. (*John* vi. 13.) The seven priests who encompass it are—1) Jesus Christ (*Matt.* vii. 19); 2) S. John Baptist (*Matt.* iii. 2); 3) Twelve Apostles (*Matt.* xxviii. 19), 4); Seventy disciples (*Luke* x. 1); 5) The company of preachers (*Isa.* xviii. 1); 6) Enoch, and Elisha (*Jude* 14); 7) The Judgment trumpeters. (*1 Cor.* xv. 52.)

II. *The City of Conscience.*—In which the soul dwells as does a king in his own city; as a citizen sanctified in baptism. The walls are in charge of angels, as their guard. The gates the five senses; the fellow citizens, memory, will understanding. Gibeah (*Josh.* xx.) a type of it. Sons of God dwell in this city, which, if it be not well guarded, is captured by evil thoughts, and is burned with the fire of sensuality, covetousness, or the like.

III. *The City of Hell.*—(*Rev.* xvi. 19.)—Cursed by God and all its inhabitants. Babylon. Its streets are full of—1) darkness (*Job* x. 21, 22); 2) mud and sulphur (*Ps.* xviii. 42); 3) fire (*Ps.* l. 3); cold (*Job* xxiv. 19); 5) wailing (*Amos* v. 15); 6) hunger (*Isa.* lxv. 13); 7) thirst. (*Luke* xvi. 24.) Many are tormented in this city of hell.

IV. *The City of God.*—(*Rev.* xxi. 1.)—Its streets are—1) magnificent; 2) Healthful, for the shadow of God is more than that of S. Peter; 3) kingly; 4) joyful (*Zech.* viii. 5); 5) thankful; 6) wise (*1 Cor.* xiii. 12; 7) satisfying. (*Ps.* xxxvi. 8.)

SERMON 499.

IDOLATRY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

Luke xix. 46.

Introduction.—That which Jacob did at Bethel we are bidden to do. (Gen. xxxv. 1, 2, 4.) ‘Strange gods’ are sins; ‘garments,’ old conversation; ‘earrings,’ pride. Having purified himself, Jacob journeyed on to Bethel; built there an altar, and offered a burnt offering, in the place where afterwards the Lord was crucified; there, God blessed him and changed his name, and the place became to him Beth-el, the house of God. Contrast the consecration and honour of God’s worship by the patriarch with its degradation by the Jew: ‘a den of thieves. Note —1) True use of an imperfect revelation; 2) an earnest service; 3) lasting blessing. Well might the prophet ask: (Jer. xi. 15.) Note (Ezek. viii. 3, 10, 14, 16, 17) which explains ‘a den of thieves.’

I. *Image of Jealousy*; or idol of Ascension.—Baal, hollow, brass, in human form, in which children were burnt alive, priests drowning their cries with timbrels. Sin of detraction which renders the heart brazen (Ecclus. xix. 12; James iii. 8); practised when people congregate even at church; represented by envious thoughts in church.

II. *Wall pictures and seventy offering incense.*—Heathen idolatry (Isa. ii. 20) to be renounced. Seventy priests, the covetous and rich, who sacrifice in the interior of their hearts to every created thing, gold, silver, precious stones, etc.; still praying. (Matt. xv. 8.) Represented by worldly thoughts in church.

III. *Women weeping for Tammuz*; or Adonis.—Heathen wailings over dead. (Hos. vi. 10). Of such as attend church to see and to be seen; hindering the divine offices by irreverence (Lam. iii. 51); or mourning whilst at church the loss of some worldly good. Represented by earthly lamentations in church.

IV. *Sun-worshippers with backs towards the Temple.*—2 Kings xvii. 16.)—Hypocrites who, coming to church, turn the back of their souls to the Lord. Saul’s purposed worship (1 Sam. xv. 24, 25) no real sorrow. Hence the punishment. (Jer. xviii. 17.) ‘The back,’ in indignation. Of such (Amos, vi. 8). Represented by formal but heartless worship in church.

V. *They who put the branch to the nose.*—Touched with branches the idols on high, and then kissed the rods in reverence; praising, not imitating holy examples. Those who hear but do not.

Epilogue.—(Eccles. v. 1.) Curse of the sins condemned of old (Ezek. viii. 18).

SERMON 500.

THE CITY OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“He beheld the city.”—*Luke* xix. 41.

Introduction.—The heart of every Christian is spiritually the Holy City Jerusalem, in which God condescends to dwell by grace; and each one ought in himself to prepare a habitation acceptable to the Divine Majesty, in which as in a temple He may make His abode. (*John* xiv. 23; *1 Cor.* iii. 16; *Prov.* viii. 3.) We often exclude God from the soul, and neglect Him, being intoxicated with the pleasures of the world, allured by its delights; ensnared by the lusts of the flesh, and having loosed the bands of sin, walking in the way of perdition. The righteous seeing this sad spectacle weep over it, knowing what the end must be. Now the unhappy sinner has peace and present security, enjoying pleasures, and honours, and dignities, but (*Luke* vi. 24). So will the hardened soul be given up to utter spoliation and destruction. For it will remain in—

I. *Imprisonment.*—‘Cast a trench;’ the lost spirits claiming at death a lost soul, will entrench, so that it can never be rescued from their grasp. 1) It can find no place of escape itself. Hopelessly guarded by the powers of evil. All contact with the good and holy taken away. Escape, once in its own power, is for ever cut off from it now. Oh! consider this horrible state of bondage.

II. *Despair.*—‘Compass thee round,’ placing before the eyes, let them turn where they will, all their sins which were committed at their suggestion. All this guilt being seen and remembered, and pressing down the soul, thrusts it by very anguish into despair of pardon, and into a state of deeper guilt.

III. *Degradation.*—‘Even with the ground, and thy children.’ Body turned into dust (*Gen.* iii. 19); and the soul and its works are placed lower than the earth, they are cast into the abyss of hell.

IV. *Ruin.*—‘Not one stone upon another.’ All thoughts, knowledge, studies, loves, all that made the soul love. (*Ps.* cxlvi. 4.)

Epilogue.—The cause of all this sad affliction: ‘Because thou knowest not.’ All calls to repentance were in vain; internal inspirations knocking at the door of the heart; outward calls by the preacher, and by the providences of life; prosperities and adversities. A ‘visitation’ of love, mercy, and grace now, there will be a sore visitation of judgment by-and by.

SERMON 501.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.”—*Luke* xix. 44.

Introduction.—The law of retribution holds good for this world as well as for the next. In this life we verily reap as we have sowed. Jerusalem, with all its beauty and privileges, was cruel and blood-thirsty; it crucified the Lord, and it perished by a most miserable destruction. That the punishment agrees with the offence, the following examples from Holy Scripture clearly prove.

I. *Temporal punishment is the counterpart of temporal sin.*—
 1) Eve (*Gen.* iii. 5) was to multiply gods, so her sorrow and conception were greatly multiplied. (*Gen.* iii. 16.) 2) Adam ate of the goodly tree (*Gen.* iii. 5), so by the sweat of his face he was ordained to eat bread. (*Gen.* iii. 19.) 3) Serpent caused the human race to return to dust (*Gen.* iii. 19), so he was commanded to eat dust. (*Gen.* iii. 14.) 4) Jacob was deceived in Leah (*Gen.* xxix. 25); he had previously deceived Isaac. (*Gen.* xxvii. 20-25.) 5) The punishment of Adonibezek was that his thumb and great toe were cut off. (*Judges* i. 6, 7.) 6) Abimelech slew his seventy brethren upon one stone. (*Judges* ix. 5.) He was slain by a stone. (*Judges* ix. 53.) 7) Saul's sword spared Agag (*1 Sam.* xv. 9, 32, 33), and his own sword slew him. (*1 Sam.* xxxi. 4.) 8) David killed Uriah. (*2 Sam.* xi. 15.) The prophecy was fulfilled. (*2 Sam.* xii. 10.) 9) Joab slew Absalom, Abner, Amasa (*1 Kings* ii. 32); himself slain with the sword. 10) Solomon lost his wisdom by his sensuality, and of all his wives left only one son, Rehoboam, who must be called foolish. (*1 Kings* xii. 12-14.)

II. *Eternal punishment will be the counterpart of temporal sin.*—The consequences of sin will be fully carried out in the great and eternal retribution. The sins of mind and body will each have their own respective punishments.

Epilogue.—Guard the springs of thought, word, and deed, knowing a full reaction accompanies the exercise of your every power.

SERMON 502.

THE TEARS OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“He beheld the city, and wept over it.”—*Luke* xix. 41.

Introduction.—There is a valuable Italian wine which is called *Lachryma Christi*; which wine is itself valueless when compared with the tears of Jesus Christ: the wine darkens the understanding; the tears enlighten the eyes, purify the mind, and soften the heart, for they teach us—

I. *The great evil of sin.*—Sin wrang tears from the riven heart of the Holy One. Grave and wise men only weep in the extremest of cases, and then for their own, rather than for the sorrows of others. Jesus Christ—God and man—wept in the midst of His triumph, for others' calamities. He wept over Jerusalem, as David wept over Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 33), as dying in sin; whilst over the pure infant he wept not. (2 Sam. xii. 23.) Jesus Christ wept over all sin as He wept then over Jerusalem. (Heb. v. 7.) Sin is—1) Hateful to God; 2) horrible to man in its effects and consequence; 3) devilish in its own nature.

II. *The means of washing away sin.*—He set an example to the men of Jerusalem; He wished them to weep with tears of repentance, and so to save themselves from their impending destruction. (*Luke* xxiii. 28, 30.) 1) The tile must be unbaked to take the drawing which could (*Ezek.* iv. 1) soon be washed out with tears of sorrow. 2) The call to repentance is a call to tears of contrition. (*Ezek.* xviii. 27, 30.) 3) Case of Hezekiah's recovery. (2 Kings xx. 3.) 4) The repentance of Nineveh was accompanied with tears. Tears are the sponge which wipes all sins out of God's book.

III. *To remember adversity in prosperity.*—At Roman triumphs a cryer shouted, ‘Look behind thee. Remember thou art man.’ The wise virgins looked forward to a time of need; Jacob took Esau by the heel (*Gen.* xxv. 26), signifying he looked to the end. The Israelites in laughter fell into idolatry. (*Exod.* xxxii. 6.)

IV. *To be merciful as well as just.*—He wept over the city, but He did not remit the punishment. His tears ought to have been a most salutary warning. S. Louis having pardoned a criminal, on reading (*Psal.* cvi. 3), revoked his pardon, lest he should be guilty himself.

Epilogue.—Sorrowing over the effects, seek to avoid sin the cause.

SERMON 503.

THE DOOMED CITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“The days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee.
 . . . one stone upon another.”—*Luke* xix. 43, 44.

Introduction.—This besieged city represents the soul of the sinner at the hour of death; subject to the fourfold punishment of invasion, siege, destruction, and demolition. We consider each of these points in turn.

I. *The invasion.*—‘Thine enemies.’ The devil and his lost spirits came—1) to Jesus Christ when in the article of death. They found nothing in Him. (*John* xiv. 30.) They saw He was mortal man; they thought to gain some hold upon him; but sinless He came into the world, and sinless He left it, and Satan never had any hold upon Him. 2) They come to the righteous and find much to take advantage of; yet they cannot seize it, for Jesus Christ has paid the penalty, and pardon is purchased for them. Neither Saints Peter, Paul, nor John can claim to be sinless, and therefore is fault to be found in all. 3) They come to be wicked, and find so great and unpardoned sin in them, that they claim them for their own. They tempt them to doubt; to vain longings.

II. *The siege.*—In death the sinner is besieged by his sins. The ‘enemies’ recall past sins to the memory to tempt to despair; they repeat all past sins of word and action which the dying soul cannot—1) deny; 2) flee from; or 3) amend; and which, therefore, bring it to an agony of desperation. Rather at this time the mind should be led to think upon the mercy of God, and upon the fruits of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

III. *The destruction.*—‘Lay thee even with the ground.’ If the body is of earth, the soul is heavenly, and has its citizenship in heaven. The lost angels would depress the soul to earth, and deprive it of all help, and hope, and communion with God.

IV. *The demolition.*—‘Not leave in thee one stone upon another.’ The wicked add thought to thought, stone upon stone; which at last shall be thrown down. For (*Ps.* cxlvi. 4.)

Epilogue.—With the Presence of Jesus Christ as a guard, all those attacks will be made in vain.

SERMON 504.

THE HOUSE OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“My house is the house of prayer.”—*Luke* xix. 46.

Introduction.—Whensoever Jesus Christ went up to Jerusalem, He went into the Temple. 1) To give us an example. As an obedient son, before going anywhere else, He went into the house of His Heavenly Father. 2) To correct any abuse there; for the priesthood is to His Body mystical, that which the stomach is to the body natural. Our Blessed Lord ever cared both to honour and to purify the Church; for the Church is—

I. *The house and dwelling-place of God.*—‘My house.’ (Rev. xxi. 3; 2 Chron. vii. 16.) God places—1) His eyes there, to note our reverence, our attention, our heartiness in His services (Prov. xv. 3); but especially in His own holy House. 2) His ‘Name’ there; His honour and glory that is, as in the Shechinah of old. The Church is the House of the Lord; to dishonour the Church is to cast contempt both upon the Lord’s House and its Master. 3) His ‘heart’ there (Matt. vi. 21); the treasury of the Lord is the faithful offerings of His people; the prayers, vows, and sighings of His faithful ones. Such is the Church, the dwelling-place of the Eyes, Name, and Heart of God.

II. *The House of Prayer.*—‘The House of Prayer.’ (2 Chron. vi. 40.) Prayers of the Church are of great price; for united prayer is of mighty avail. The prayer offered in God’s appointed—1) House; place; 2) time; seasons of prayer; 3) way; in forms dictated by His Holy Spirit, and sanctioned by the use of the Church in all ages.

III. *The House of Praise.*—(Matt. xxi. 15)—‘If these should hold their peace, the very stones would immediately cry out.’ (Luke xxi. 40.) Explain seven canonical hours of praise. Church is the house of praise, as being the type of the eternal temple in heaven. (Rev. xiv. 23.)

IV. *The house of teaching.*—‘He taught daily in the Temple.’ The Temple teaching of our Lord contained three elements in which He must be imitated. 1) A perfect life which is a pomegranate. (Exod. xxxix. 25.) 2) Pure doctrine, the ‘bells.’ (1 Cor. xiv. 8.) 3) Burning love; ‘golden’ (Jer. xx. 9) or fiery.

Epilogue.—Frequent, love, and honour, the Church and her services, and say with David. (Ps. xxvi. 8.)

SERMON 505.

THE BEWAILED SINNER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“If thou hadst known, even thou . . . they are hid from thine eyes.”—

Luke xix. 42.

Introduction.—These weeping words of Jesus Christ over the lost city ought by every preacher to be pronounced weeping and grieving over every sinner prospering in this world, who is all unmindful of the torments which are prepared for him. (Phil. iii. 17-20.) Sinners are (Deut. xxxii. 28, 29). There are four evils about to fall upon the sinner, which must lead to weeping if thought over.

I. *The spoliation of temporal things.*—(Ps. xlix. 17; Matt. xxv. 29.)—‘That hath ’glory. That hath not ’grace.’ (Luke xii. 20.) Sad to think how entirely some minds are set upon—1) Loved ones; 2) learning; 3) riches and honours, all of which they must leave when they die. Death to such is not a reunion with Jesus Christ, but a most hard and bitter separation.

II. *The loss of repentance and mercy.*—This loss separates men from demons. Our day of repentance now, which, if unused, will be changed into the night of eternal remorse (Ps. lxxv. 2), whilst the ‘time’ or the ‘assembly’ remain man’s free will is still his own, but when the visitation comes (Eccles. xi. 3), no longer a place for repentance.

III. *The great confusion.*—(Jer. xx. 11.)—The causes of this confusion will be—1) The uncovering of all the sinner’s works (Ecclus. xi. 29; Isa. xlvii. 3; Nahum iii. 5); all secret thoughts, words, and deeds, exposed to the gaze of men, and angels, and of God. 2) The reproach of the benefits of Jesus Christ, especially of His Passion, the marks of which will appear in His flesh. (Zech. xii. 10; Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30.) 3) The derision of God, His holy persons and things. (Ps. ii. 4; Prov. i. 26; Ps. lii. 6.) All these will rise up in condemnation of and to the confusion of the sinner.

IV. *The cruel separation.*—1) From the elect. (Matt. xiii. 41; xxiv. 40.) 2) From glory. (Isa. xxvi. 10.) This loss will be to many almost as painful as the punishment of hell. 3) From heaven itself, to be thrust down to hell. (Matt. xii. 50.)

Epilogue.—Let us know, and ever live in our knowledge of this, our day of visitation, and learn to turn it to its true account.

SERMON 506.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“And when He was come near . . . daily in the temple.”—*Luke* xix. 41-47.

Introduction.—No daily teachings unless there were daily hearers. The Jews shame us in hearing. (*Luke* xix. 48.) If we listen to a sermon once a week, we are troubled with weariness, sleepiness, and with wandering thoughts. Listen to the teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, Who bids us learn—

I. *To think over imminent evils.*—Dangers impend and life draws near its close, and that which the Jews laughed at or exulted in, Jesus Christ wept over. (*Lam.* i. 9.) Physicians grieve over a patient who will not use the prescribed remedies. The good, like Jacob (*Gen.* xxv. 26), seize worldly pleasures by the feet, looking at their end; the wicked hold them by the head, looking only at their beginning. Meditation upon the last things is an efficacious remedy against sin. Jesus Christ, in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, never forgot his coming Passion and death.

II. *The compassion and long-suffering of God.*—‘He wept,’ as if He said (*Isa.* i. 24); yet He gave to her thirty-eight years for repentance, as (*Isa.* xlii. 14).

III. *The severe justice of God.*—Seen—1) in the cutting off of the people (*Rom.* xi. 20-23); 2) the destruction of the fair and beautiful city; so perished Pentapolis, a paradise (*Gen.* xiii. 10); 3) in the equality of retribution. Our Lord found cords in the Temple, out of which he made scourges. The sins of the Jews were those small cords. (*Prov.* v. 22.)

IV. *The temple is to be honoured.*—1) By prayer before all things else; 2) by veneration and worship (*Mark* xi. 15, 16; *Isa.* lvi. 7). We have the Eucharist, which is above the Ark.

V. *The Divine Power of Jesus Christ.*—So easily cleansing the Temple (*ver.* 45); no one being able to resist Him; no sword or spear in His hand, only a scourge of small cord. What will our Blessed Lord not do when He comes in His power and judgment day?

VI. *The vanity of worldly glory.*—(*Luke* xxi. 6; *Matt.* xxiv. 2; *Mark* xiii. 2.) So of buildings to a city: strength to a hero; beauty to a woman; youth to the young, etc. Hezekiah fell (*Isa.* xxxviii. 13) as ‘a lion,’ etc.

SERMON 507.

THE USE OF GRACE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“By the grace of God I am what I am.”—1 *Cor.* xv. 10.

Introduction.—Without ‘the grace of God’ a man in this present life can neither do, nor have, nor avail anything. Grace being so necessary, ought to be loved and cherished by us; so that, having gained it, we may not lose it by our sin. Unworthy receivers of the grace of God belong to five classes, who—

I. *Do not seek grace in their need.*—They know and feel their necessity; they see themselves to be defiled by sin, to be hateful to God and the holy Angels (Ps. xiv. 2, 3), yet they seek not to be washed by the waters of grace; to be consumed by the fire of lust, yet they seek not this water to extinguish it. It implies great negligence to fail in grace, now that its fountains are so freely open. (Heb. iv. 16.) Now is the time of help and of gifts.

II. *Do not open their hearts to grace.*—(Rev. iii. 20.)—Hence the great mercy of God, at which we ought to blush, even if we fear not His justice. Grace is as the sun’s rays. Oh open windows of the soul and let them in! (Heb. xii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 13.)

III. *Quench the Spirit.*—(1 Thess. v. 19.)—This happens when this gift is hidden, when no progress is made by its use. (1 Tim. iv. 14.) Grace is the bread of the soul; and (Prov. xxxi. 27) ceasing to work, our spiritual bread fails; hence the women (Isa. iv. 1) with whom agrees. (Gen. xxx. 1.)

IV. *Attribute to another cause the effect of grace.*—(1 Kings iii. 20.)—If woman resisted the taking of her child, how jealous is God for the keeping of His grace. S. Paul in text, gives grace its due; and (Gal. ii. 21.)

V. *Hate grace, and try to keep it from others.*—Such encourage all sin and sinners; they revel in their opposition to the higher life.

Epilogue.—To abuse grace is to grieve God, the Author of good (Eph. iv. 30; Heb. x. 29); from which may we be saved.

SERMON 508.

THE CALL OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“One born out of due time.”—1 Cor. xv. 8.

Introduction.—S. Paul speaks of his call as being ‘born,’ and being called after and under different circumstances from the rest of the Apostles, as being ‘born out of due time.’ We notice six particulars in this call of Jesus Christ to S. Paul, which show His dealings with men; a call in which He called—

I. *A persecutor.*—‘Persecuted.’ The other Apostles were simply taken from different followings; S. Paul from active and bitter persecution. The Spirit touched his sin, and changed it to grace, just as the Spirit caused Saul to prophecy whilst he was wishing to injure David. (1 Sam. xviii. 10.) God’s Spirit often meets and conquers man’s spirit at its worst times, and in its most obstinate of moods.

II. *One afar off.*—(Isa. lx. 4.)—Sons, as being strong in the faith. The other Apostles were called by the Lord when He was nigh them, living on earth; S. Paul when He was afar off in heaven. They had been somewhat prepared by S. John Baptist’s preaching. S. Paul was all unprepared, and afar off the Gospel. No one now is very far from God, and is beyond the love and pardon of Jesus Christ.

III. *One stricken down.*—Paul was stricken to the ground by the appearance of His divinity. The other Apostles were called by the Son of Man in His lowly humanity; S. Paul was alone called by the Son of God in His glorious divinity, too bright to be beheld by mortal eye: a voice only heard.

IV. *One taken out of himself.*—By the singular signs which accompanied his conversion, Saul was taken out of himself. The Lord called others by a word or by a look even. S. Paul He spake to when he was blinded, and astonished. Different medicines are required for different kinds of disease.

V. *One taught by a direct revelation.*—Saul was taught by a course of heavenly teaching. Others were taught the Gospel in an earthly school by men; S. Paul in a heavenly school by angels. (Gal. i. 12.)

VI. *One endowed with supernatural grace.*—With a new order of gift was Saul endowed. The Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven upon the other Apostles. S. Paul was caught up to receive Him. (2 Cor. xii. 3, 4.)

Epilogue.—No limit to God’s dealings with man.

SERMON 509.

THE FATUITY OF THE PHARISEE.—(*Holy Gospel,*
Ser. I.)

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican.”—*Luke* xviii. 10.

Introduction.—The three points for consideration in this Gospel are—1) The foolishness or fatuity of pride in the Pharisee. 2) The discretion of humility in the Publican. 3) The truth of the judgment delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ. Upon the first point we note that the fatuity of the Pharisee was seen in six particulars. In—

I. *Thinking that he only was righteous.*—Egregious folly to believe that the sun of righteousness shines only upon ourselves; that we only are righteous amongst our neighbours and friends. This odious form of ignorant self-conceit makes us set up ourselves as the censors and judges of others. To such we say. (Matt. vii. 5.)

II. *Despising the Publican.*—This he did in an especial manner, whilst no one ought to be despised. The man that by faithful self-examination has found out his own sins and imperfections, cannot despise any one; he feels his own imperfections too keenly to do so; he obeys (Rom. xii. 10); and especially. (Luke xiv. 10.)

III. *Glorying in his false coin.*—That is in his good works, which lacked that grace and humility which alone renders them acceptable to God. Amongst the wise, are things really honest; amongst the multitude, are the semblances of honest things.

IV. *Asking charity with full hands.*—He came seeking God's mercy, and yet boasting of the riches of his good works; as if a beggar held out a hand full of money when asking for alms. (Rev. iii. 17, 18.)

V. *Hiding his disease, and yet seeking healing.*—No uncovering or confession of sin; no acknowledgment of his own infirmity. How can the wound be healed which is not uncovered?

VI. *Beginning his devotions at the wrong end.*—It ought to begin with prayer, not with thanksgiving; and with that confession of sin that begets—1) humility; 2) tears of contrition; 3) earnest desire of amendment.

Epilogue.—Avoid such foolishness, and then will God accept you.

SERMON 510.

THE GRACE OF HUMILITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”—

Luke xviii. 14.

Introduction.—The tower of Babel (Gen. xi. 7, 8) is a type of the proud soul that, by its own merits, seeks to gain heaven; and its incomplete condition is a type of the failure of the hopes and expectations of the proud. Humility is a grace full of benefit and profit, and especially so upon three accounts.

I. *Of gracious evasion.*—By humility—1) man avoids diabolical temptation, and escapes from its snare. ‘No one can overcome spiritual wickedness, save by the arms of humility. ‘Be thou humble; and not presuming upon thine own powers; then shalt thou overcome.’ (Aug.) David, the humble, conquered Goliath, the great and proud, because he came against him humbly trusting in God’s name. (1 Sam. xvii. 45.) 2) ‘Humility cannot be depressed, and therefore it averts the anger of God.’ (Greg.) As in the cases of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 26); Ahab (1 Kings xxi. 29); Nineveh (Jonah iii. 6). 3) It averts the indignation of man; as Jacob before Esau (Gen. xxxii. 13-24); Gideon before the Midianites. (Judges viii. 1, 2.)

II. *Of victorious perfection.*—Humility is the foundation of perfection. A high spiritual fabric can and must be founded upon humility. Faith is the foundation of an approach to God. (Heb. xi. 6.) But humility is that groundwork which disposes the soul both to the knowledge and to the love of divine things. Pride of heart overclouds all that faith reveals. The measure of grace depends upon the dower of spiritual gifts, and this dower is in proportion to our humility of soul. Hence Mary’s great grace. (Luke x. 39.) ‘He who collects the other graces without humility, is like one who piles up a heap of dust before the wind.’ (Greg.) Humility is not only the foundation, but also the preservative of grace.

III. *Of glorious exaltation.*—The proportion of future glory will agree with present humiliation. Humility is the one true sign of election. Note the humility in all God’s saints and the extreme humility in His own dear son.

Epilogue.—See that grace be not lost through pride. Remember, and act upon. (Matt. xviii. 3.)

SERMON 511.

THE SIN OF BOASTING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“I fast thrice in the week.”—*Luke* xviii. 12.

Introduction.—Lucian, in one of his dialogues, relates the case of two men going into the theatre to play on the harp: one harp was covered with gold and jewels, but its strings broke, and the admiration of the spectators was changed to contempt; the harp of the other man was a very poor and common one, yet it gave out the sweetest sounds, and delighted all. The former harp represents the Pharisee, who plays upon his outside work and fair appearance; the latter harp resembles the poor publican. Boasting and vainglory are very offensive to man, but with God they receive a heavy punishment. We note of boasting that it—

I. *Destroys that which is good.*—Real ability, kindness, and labour, are all marred, if not entirely destroyed, by a boastful spirit. (*Matt.* vi. 2.) When we sound our own trumpet, it seems to others to be sadly out of tune. The Israelites did this before their Ark. Therefore (*Ps.* lxxviii. 61.) So the King of Tyre was overthrown. (*Ezek.* xxviii. 17.)

II. *It brings sin.*—Boasting defiles and destroys the soul by taking away honour from God, and giving it to itself. Man’s hand becomes morally leprous, if it be shown to others when doing a good deed. (*Exod.* iv. 6.) Hands require a covering to keep them fair and white. Our pearls of holy thought and work are not to be cast before men.

III. *It forfeits glory and grace with God and man.*—And it incurs the hatred of God and man. 1) Experience proves boasters to be hateful and wearisome. 2) It brings its followers into many an unpleasant circumstance. Fable of Boasting Traveller. 3) It condemns a man as a robber of God’s glory. (*John* v. 44.) Much real praise and appreciation is lost by boasting.

IV. *It betrays the boaster’s weakness.*—It sets forth inanity, and not power; like damp wood which gives out a great smoke and but small heat. (*Exod.* xxxiv. 29.) Moses knew not that his face shone.

V. *It often loses the subject of its boasting.*—It cost Hezekiah all his possessions. (*2 Kings* xx. 13, 17.)

Epilogue.—Bear all prosperity and gifts in meekness, thankfulness, and love.

SERMON 512.

THE VICTORY OF THE SINNER.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IV.)

“This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”—*Luke*
xviii. 14.

Introduction.—This parable represents a racecourse, in which the Pharisee and the Publican were racers. At the old horse sports, a man used to contend against the horses by the help of stilts, and his long and rapid leaps more than atoned for the swiftness of the horses. The Pharisee was a righteous man; all he said of himself was true. The Publican was a sinner, yet he gained the day; and the stilts which he used were prayer and humility. Let us note the grounds of the victory of the publican.

I. *He stood afar off.*—As unworthy to approach the altar; as the lepers stood apart from Jesus Christ; as the prodigal afar from the father's house; as knowing God to be a consuming fire, and himself to be dry and worthless wood. Pharisee had no humility of contrast between God and himself. Of such (Isa. lviii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 26.) Shell-fish is safe remaining at the bottom of the sea; coming up to the sun it is netted by the fishermen. To stand near a prince implies—1) confidence; 2) friendship; and 3) dignity. So in God's sight, to stand near to His altar.

II. *He prayed aloud.*—Silent prayer is not to be condemned, save when it cloaks pride, and lacks both reverence and devotion. People pray in their hats on entering church as if ashamed of the act. The Pharisee prayed ‘with himself;’ just as the unjust steward, ‘said within himself.’ (Luke xvi. 3.) ‘Supplication,’ outward devotion, humility, and reverence, must accompany prayer. (Phil. iv. 6.) Devout prayer of Elijah. (1 Kings xviii. 42.) Sweet harmony when voice and soul agree. (Lau. Just.) Pray with—1) voice; 2) devotion; 3) humility.

III. *He would not lift up his eyes to heaven.*—As unworthy of heaven from his sins. Hence his reward. For (James iv. 6.) Humble are empty vessels; lowly valleys, ready, unlike the hills, to receive and retain the grace of God. Job's humility. (Job xxxi. 26.) The Tyrians electing a king who first saw the rising sun, selected him who watched the west, and saw his last setting rays; the rest watching the east. Publican is blessed for his—1) modesty; 2) humility; 3) self-judgment.

IV. *He despised no one.*—Publican was like Mordecai; the Pharisee like Haman. (Esther. v. 6.)

Epilogue.—Seek to gain a lowly spirit like the Publican.

SERMON 513.

INTENTION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”—
Luke xviii. 14.

Introduction.—The Pharisee represents a very common type of mind, one not wholly evil, but one devoid of any high or noble intention. Intention determines the value of all our acts, and it is revealed as the working of the act unfolds itself. The intention of the Pharisee is seen in that he made—

I. *A good beginning.*—1) He went up to God's own house of prayer; 2) to fulfil the purpose for which that house was built; 3) as the appointed house of prayer; hence the publican was there too. All this was very good and right, so far as the action was concerned; but it was wrong and rotten in the intention with which it was performed. Action is the body which clothes intention. Pray for, and seek earnestly to have a right intention or motive in all things.

II. *A bad progress.*—At the hour of, and in the house of, prayer the Pharisee made no real prayer, but poured out a sinful and worthless strain of self-praise. The value of his intention was seen in the working out of it. Give the hypocrite time he must unmask himself; the true bent of a man's heart cannot long remain hidden. A bad intention causes the best work to fail in its progress, like the reform of Jehu.

III. *A worse ending.*—The Pharisee was condemned in his heart as he went down to his house. He knew that all this going up to the Temple had been to him worse than useless. Like an unskilled doctor he had dressed the wounds of sensuality and avarice, but not that of pride of heart. Like a careless general, he had left one point of the camp undefended; like a thoughtless shipwright, who leaves one place in the vessel uncaulked.

Epilogue.—Guard with a jealous eye the springs of thought and action. Intention is a fountain of either life or death.

SERMON 514.

PRESENT CONTRITION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“God be merciful to me a sinner.”—*Luke* xviii. 13.

Introduction.—The Publican was smitten with an instant or present contrition, which brought a present justification, and secured the hope of a future pardon. Contrition must not be delayed, since the uncontrite—

I. *Are at enmity with God.*—Such a state is very terrible in itself, and it brings great evils with it; and it may entail eternal death. It is a state which is not to be endured even for a single day. It is a snare of Satan, from which we should at once seek to escape, had we only eyes to see it aright. David said of the spiritual house of the soul (*Ps.* cxxxii. 4, 5) by contrition and cleansing tears prepared for Him. David burdened by sin. (*Ps.* xxxii. 5.) Perfect contrition is the final disposition towards grace, and it implies the love of God before all things. The lepers who were cleansed before they came to the priest are the type of it.

II. *Are ever adding sin to sin.*—Unrepented sin attracts like the magnet to other sin. 1) By God's justice, since the wilful sinner is abandoned by grace; 2) by the greater weakness of the will which sin engenders; 3) from the attractive power of sin; as holiness is attractive so is sin. Such attraction is (*Ps.* xlii. 7); a landslip carries in its progress a vast amount of detrital matter. David multiplied sins after his adultery. S. Peter after he first denied went on denying. (*Jer.* xiii. 16.)

III. *Are ever under an impending sword.*—The anger of God is ever ready to fall upon the uncontrite. Upon some sinners the judgment falls when least expected, without either a flood or the earth opening; sudden death is very common in the world. Sad to be living under God's curse.

IV. *Are losing the gifts and exercise of grace.*—Such are poor whilst they might be rich in the merits of Jesus Christ, and themselves fruitful in every good work. Golden opportunities are passed by them, and the daylight is waning fast. (*Jer.* viii. 20.) The uncontrite are doing dead instead of living works.

Epilogue.—Pardon can come in a moment, or be lost in a moment. Contrition, if real is never too late; but it may never come at all; and coming late it brings small joy with it.

SERMON 515.

CONTRITION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”—

Luke xviii. 14.

Introduction.—How can I be justified? Will these few simple words, “God be merciful” do so mighty a work? Yes. Verily not in themselves, but from the disposition which they indicate. The Publican smote his breast in his grief of contrition; reproving his own heart as the source of so great wickedness; by his true and humble repentance, he, the unrighteous, was made righteous. I pray for all of you, O hearers, this great grace of justification, that none of you may go out of this church, of whom the words of our text may not be true. Yet can we only speak the words of the Prophet. (*Ezek. xviii. 21, 22.*) Let us note—

I. *The nature of contrition.*—Contrition is a most noble grief, by which man repents him of his sin, as being an offence against God, the chief good, which he loves and values before all things for His own sake, as neither hoping for heaven nor fearing hell. This is that love which opens the heart to God, and so procures pardon. (*Ps. xxxii. 5.*) There is, in proportion to former sin, a great difficulty in developing this perfect act of love, and of perfectly converting the will, greatly affected towards the sensible good, to the incommunicable good.

II. *How contrition can be awakened.*—(*Ps. xxxix. 3.*)—The fire of love excites the will to contrition, and is kindled by asking, in reference to our Lord’s Passion, Who suffered? What did He suffer? For whom? and Why did He suffer?

III. *Contrition perfectly avails for salvation.*—When nothing but the broken heart and will remain, when all other means of grace are not to be had, then by itself does true contrition gain pardon and acceptance with Jesus Christ. (*Ps. li. 17.*)

IV. *Contrition leads to amendment of life.*—We cannot repeat that act which has caused us such sorrow, grief, and shame. If not for God’s sake and His holy laws, for our own, for the opening of the hardly healed wounds of conscience, we cannot, we dare not sin.

Epilogue.—Place Jesus Christ crucified ever before the soul. Make an act of contrition when the temptation to sin comes strongly upon you.

SERMON 516.

THE POWER OF HUMILITY.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)

“God be merciful to me a sinner.”—*Luke xviii. 13.*

Introduction.—These words, which form the short prayer of the penitent Publican, are indeed few, but still they are of great efficacy and power. By this prayer, the Publican gained at once pardon for past sin, and the grace of justification for the time to come. This blessed result was chiefly caused by that humility which is the origin, or rather the mother, of all the other Christian graces, and which, as bringing down upon its possessors many blessings, should be earnestly sought for by all. Humility—

I. *Makes prayer acceptable.*—The prayer of the humble is acceptable to God, Who grants to such both a quick hearing and a ready answer. (Ps. cii. 7, 10, 17.) So were answered the prayers of Hannah and of S. Mary Magdalene. (Ecclus. xxxv. 21.)

II. *Gains grace and other spiritual gifts.*—(James iv. 10; Prov. xi. 2.)—The Divine wisdom, like rain, does not remain upon the high mountains, nor does it fertilise them, but it descends into the valleys, there to remain and make them fruitful; so the showers of Divine grace, and the waters of wisdom, do not remain in hard and proud hearts, but descend to humble souls and irrigate them. (Ps. lxxv. 13; Isa. xl. 4.)

III. *Gains pardon for sins.*—David’s humility stayed the destroying angel. (2 Sam. xxiv. 16.) The Ninevites humbled themselves before God. (Jonah iii. 5-10.) So (Ps. cxv. 5) when brought low, then comes deliverance.

IV. *Exalts to glory and honour.*—Sometimes in this life, always in the life to come. (Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14; Matt. xxiii. 12.) Joseph in this life was taken from an Egyptian prison to a throne. (Gen. xxxix. 20; xli. 40-46.) Others are so exalted in the life to come. (Matt. xviii. 4; 1 Peter v. 6.) Whilst of the proud. (Ps. xviii. 27.)

Epilogue.—Seek we true dignity, by cherishing that spirit which is alike acceptable with God and man.

SERMON 517.

VAINGLORY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.”—*Luke* xviii. 11.

Introduction.—Almost all sinners love their like; the vain-glorious alone hate the proud; hence they are ever quarrelling. A king once had painted a bull in a rich pasture, with the motto, ‘I admit no one.’ Hence the Pharisee, ‘I am not as other men,’ I am just; the others are sinners. Another picture painted was that of a flourishing vine being wasted, with (Ps. lxxx. 13) for a motto. The vine represents the conversation of the Pharisee; ‘the boar’ his vainglorious spirit, which wastes and destroys it. Note some examples of vain-glory.

I. *The heathen knew the shame of vainglory*.—Demosthenes was called by Cicero ‘*Leviculus*,’ because he praised himself when pointed at by a water-carrier. Cicero, on the senate rising when he sneezed, said, ‘Now I rejoice that I laboured for my country.’ Another retorted, ‘Unless you had laboured with your brain you would not have sneezed.’ Socrates looked at the rent cloak of Antisthenes, and said, ‘I see your vanity through your rent.’

II. *The vainglory of Nebuchadnezzar*.—(Dan. iv. 30-34). Grass as opposed to pride. (Isa. xl. 6.)

III. *The vainglory of Samaria*.—(Isa. xxviii. 1-3).—Hence their great captivity. (2 Kings xvii. 24.) Samaria was occupied by the Babylonians, since ‘confusion’ ever follows upon vainglory.

IV. *The vainglory of Samson*.—(Judges xv. 16).—He cast the jaw-bone away, and his glory was humbled when asked. (Judges xv. 18.)

V. *The vainglory of David*.—(1 Chron. xxi. 1, 2; 2 Sam. xxiv. 9).—Remorse for vainglorious act (2 Sam. xxiv. 10); and death of seventy thousand men.

VI. *Vainglory in wickedness*.—Herostratus, who burned the temple of Diana at Ephesus; Oligatus, who most cruelly tortured Sfortias. A glory in great criminal acts.

Epilogue.—O Pharisee! O vainglorious! Place Jesus before thee in all His Passion. He who seeks other glory than this is a rebel, thief, and akin to the devil.

SERMON 518.**THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—***(Holy Gospel,
Ser. X.)*

“He spake this parable . . . shall be exalted.”—*Luke* xviii. 9-15.

Introduction.—If we wish to find anything in this pasture of the word, we must look for it, like the Publican, humbly with eyes turned towards the ground, on which grow the ears of corn, and not with up-turned eyes like the Pharisee. We will glean some corn with the poor, with downcast eyes, that so we may prepare ourselves spiritual bread, that we may be able to return to the home of eternity with full sheaves, and there to lift up our heads. (Ps. cxix. 162.) We glean in three fields.

I. *The field of Jesus Christ.*—1) To speak cautiously. ‘Unto certain;’ no name mentioned. Jesus Christ only mentioned the names of good men, Simon the leper, Nicodemus, etc. He condemned classes, but not individuals by name. 2) Not to be exalted by good things, and to despair of evil things. The Pharisee was reproved, whilst the Publican was praised. 3) The first sometimes will be last, and the last first. The Publican was justified before the Pharisee.

II. *The field of the Publican.*—1) Humility: ‘Stood afar off,’ etc.; unworthy to come nigh God because of sin. 2) Modesty: ‘Not lift up his eyes,’ as fearing the shame of meeting God’s eye: as Absalom (2 Sam. xiv. 24) kept from David’s face. 3) Repentance: ‘Smote upon his breast;’ as if he would divide his heart, and bruise the fount of sin, which is worthy of all punishment. 4) An act of contrition; a prayer: ‘God be merciful,’ etc., which expresses a hope of pardon.

III. *The field of the Pharisee.*—1) To avoid vainglory; which, as the hoar-frost, kills all the first-fruits of the early crops. 2) To pray humbly; for pride corrupted and made his prayer valueless. 3) How much more is a proud spirit to be feared by those who have not a shadow of holiness to plead by.

SERMON 519.

INSUFFICIENCY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Our sufficiency is of God.”—2 *Cor.* xii. 5.

Introduction.—It gives great delight when a man who is suffering under some grievous defect is shown a means by which he may be healed. So the Church comforts her failing children by pointing out to them the Apostle’s words, ‘Our sufficiency,’ etc. We note some special points in which we are all deficient.

I. *Our insufficiency of being, or life.*—1) Man is incapable of being, for being formed of nothing, he returns to nothing, except he be preserved by God. Nature needs a sustainer as much as a creator. Note the folly of those who set themselves above God. (*Isa.* x. 15), Who is. (*Heb.* i. 3.) 2) Man is incapable of defending himself against his enemies, especially such as are spiritual, without the help of God. (*Lam.* iii. 22.) Note the folly of those who would make war against God; unable to defend themselves, and yet challenging God. 3) Man is incapable of supplying his own bodily wants; his food and clothing. Hence it is a deep ingratitude to sin against so kind a Benefactor. Elijah would have been most ungrateful had he sinned after. (*1 Kings* xvii. 6.)

II. *Our insufficiency for living well.*—1) Man is insufficient to begin even a good life; he cannot even think what is right. (*2 Cor.* iii. 5.) It is mere folly to think to dispense with Divine grace. 2) Insufficient to persevere in holiness, which is soon lost, unless it be guarded by the Giver of it. Note the danger of false security. S. Peter’s fall. (*1 Cor.* x. 12.) 3) Insufficient to advance in holiness without the help of God. (*Jer.* xvii. 7; *Isa.* xl. 31.) Note the madness of those who live without prayer.

III. *Our insufficiency in satisfying our desires.*—This arises from—1) The capacity of the soul, which God alone is sufficient to fill. 2) The vanity of temporal possessions, which cannot satisfy the soul. (*Luke* i. 53.) 3) The impossibility of temporal things entering essentially into the human heart.

Epilogue.—Seek more earnestly the grace of God.

SERMON 520.

THE KILLING LETTER.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The letter killeth.”—2 *Cor.* iii. 6.

Introduction.—1) Some wrongly understand by ‘the letter’ all the teaching of the Scripture, which they say is imperfect and profitless; it is only the interior scripture which is written on the heart which is worthy of attention. (Rom. ii. 15.) 2) Others regard the law to be the letter, as provoking lust (Rom. vii. 7); as killing (John viii. 5); as bringing in a knowledge of sin. 3) ‘The letter’ is the literal sense of Holy Scripture, without its spiritual meaning, which often kills, and edifies not. 4) It is knowledge or wisdom, or even preaching, for vainglory, and not according to the spirit and love. 5) It is the word which is heard, remembered, discussed, and not turned to the salvation of the soul.

I. *The law of sin written in our flesh.*—Proneness to sin. Of this letter (Rom. vii. 23). An indelible letter, first written by Adam, who framed the steps by which the enemy comes in to corrupt the holy, writing the law of sin on the five senses (Jer. ix. 21), applies to all the senses as well as sight. The soul is a register of self, and the impenitent sinner is ever writing on it, to his own condemnation, the law of sin, that kills. This writing is rendered faint by sincere repentance, and blotted out when pardon is gained.

II. *The law of natural inclination.*—As belonging to an active life. This letter is written in our inferior reason, it ever tends to sensuality and desire; it reaches after the apple of pleasure, hence it is likened to the woman Eve. It is concerned with the affairs of the body, and is easily defiled; and hence this letter kills. The higher reason, which tends towards the eternal, is ‘the Spirit that giveth life.’

III. *The law of imagination.*—As belonging to a contemplative life, which contains the letter that killeth, being those intelligible forms received from things of the senses which are written in the intellect. This play and imagination hinders true contemplation, which gives spiritual life to the soul. Rachel a type of contemplation (Gen. xxxi. 34), sat upon her father’s images.

Epilogue.—Seek that Holy Spirit Who alone giveth life.

SERMON 521.

THE ACTS OF HEALING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

"They bring unto Him one that was deaf."—*Mark* vii. 32.

Introduction.—Not to dwell upon this poor man being a type of the sinner, we will note the several acts by which his cure was miraculously wrought, by the loving agency of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sinner is saved and pardoned, when—

I. *He is brought to Jesus Christ.*—This is in every case the beginning of pardon and healing. This bringing is brought about—1) By preaching (*Acts* ii. 37, 41; *Matt.* xxvi. 75); 'the cock' being representative of the preacher. 2) By infirmity and a near death, or any other severe infliction. (*Ps.* xvi. 4; *Isa.* xxxviii. 2, 3.) 3) By the example of a holy life. (*Prov.* xxvii. 17.) 4) By almsgiving. (*Acts* x. 31.)

II. *The Saviour is besought on his behalf.*—The prayers of the faithful are of great avail. (*James* v. 16-19.) So Job prayed for his friends. (*Job* xlii. 8.) So did the vinedresser intercede for his vine. (*Luke* xiii. 8-11.)

III. *He is removed from the multitude.*—All who are penitent and are seeking amendment, must remove themselves from evil associations, and separate themselves from the occasion of sin. So Jairus's daughter is separated from her companions. (*Matt.* ix. 25.) The 'wild ass' is a type of the despisers of the world. (*Job* xxxix. 7.) Hence the command. (*Jer.* xlvi. 28; *Ps.* lv. 7.)

IV. *The Saviour puts His fingers into his ears.*—Infuses that wisdom into the understanding, which brings a knowledge of sin with it. The ear touched by the finger of Jesus Christ, is the ear that hears. (*Matt.* xiii. 9.)

V. *He is anointed with the spittle of Divine taste.*—So as to enjoy the good and spiritual things of God, for as the saliva influences the taste of the food, so does the spiritual taste depend upon the anointing of the Lord by the grace of God the Holy Ghost.

VI. *The Saviour looks up and sighs.*—To indicate that help cometh alone from heaven, and that sin is a disease to cause true grief. (*John* xi. 35.)

Epilogue.—Cast not away any one means of healing that God may ordain.

SERMON 522.

TRUE GLORY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“He charged them that they should tell no man.”—*Mark* vii. 36.

Introduction.—This precept was not so much for observation in this particular case, as to teach us to humble ourselves when we may perform any holy work, so as to avoid seeking applause ourselves, whilst we praise and sound the praises of all our benefactors. Our Blessed Lord knew enough of human nature, to know that which (v. 36) would flow from His command. Since he who was prohibited from speaking could not hold his tongue, the Lord wished to indicate how joyously and fervently they ought to preach, to whom such permission is given. We learn from this sequel to the miracle—

I. *To avoid the praise of men.*—To desire glory is inglorious, but true glory is to despise it, and to make no care of it, but in relation to it to do and say that alone which may please God. (Chrysos.) It argues a poor, feeble mind, having little strength and reliance in itself, to court the praise of others. The approval of our own conscience, and the secret feeling that God is on our side, constitutes our true praise.

II. *To seek the glory of God.*—So did the healed man and his companions. (1 Cor. x. 31.) If we are content to seek all our glory from God, resting satisfied with His inspection into our feelings and motives, we shall be fit to receive a reward from Him. God honours those who honour Him, and ‘thy Father,’ etc. (Matt. vi. 4.) The hidden life of holiness glorifies God on earth, and He afterwards will glorify us in heaven.

III. *To extol the Divine work.*—‘He hath done all things well.’ (Ps. civ. 24; Gen. i. 31.) God only in His omnipotence allows any evil in His creation, that He may show His goodness in removing the evil, and His justice in punishing sin and rewarding holiness. (Rev. xv. 5.)

Epilogue.—Our gratitude to Jesus Christ is to be shown by our desiring His glory rather than our own; in our making Him all in all, and ourselves as less than nothing.

SERMON 523.

SPIRITUAL DEAFNESS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“He maketh the deaf to hear.”—*Lucæ vii. 37.*

Introduction.—We were not created deaf, but became so when the first man opened his ears to the voice of the enemy. The Protoplast gave ear to evil inspirations, so that now we are unable either to hear or to understand the loving and most sweet inspirations of the Eternal Word, ineffably nigh to us as He is, being within in the depth of the soul. Let us note this deafness and its cure.

I. *The devil is ever making us deaf.*—He speaks to us, and makes us deaf to the voice—1) Of God; 2) of His precepts; 3 of His preachers. He makes us deaf by—1) suggesting every disorderly thought; so that love or the intention of failing creatures; or the world, and whatsoever things are joined to it: honours, riches, friends, etc., each are whispering enemies: 2) By reducing all religious exercises to a matter of form and habit, that so all the inward ears become stopped up, that men are unable, by reason, hearing, or intellect, to receive the Eternal Word, that as often as God is willing to inspire the ears of their hearts, other things so occupy them, that no access can be given to the inspiration of the Word; to the hearing of His soft still voice pleading with the soul.

II. *Love opens the ears.*—(*John xiv. 23.*)—S. Gregory gives it as the test of the love of God abiding in the soul, when it remains inwardly at peace and unmoved, in the midst of a storm of affliction, perplexity, and sore distress; neither exalted by prosperity, nor cast down by misfortune; for the Presence of the Beloved one is ever a spring of inward peace. This love, which unstops the ears, to be true, must manifest itself—1) In thankfulness to God for His Creation, Incarnation, and for all the manifold gifts which are flowing out from Him to all men. 2) In shining before men in deeds and words of love to all men. So the hearts of all the perfect and enlightened friends of God, are wholly melted by this common love towards all, both living and dead.

III. *The effect of unstopping the ears of the soul.*—Is to give the seven gifts of God the Holy Ghost: fear, love, knowledge, strength, counsel, understanding, and wisdom.

Epilogue.—Remove all things that come between the soul and God.

SERMON 524.

THE SAVIOUR'S SIGH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“He sighed, and said unto him. Ephphatha.”—*Mark* vii. 34.

Introduction.—What need to sigh, when the Lord knew that He had power to remove all cause for sadness? Men sigh over what they grieve but cannot hinder, not over things in their own power. Jesus Christ sighed to show—

I. *That He was very man.*—He sighed as man whilst He healed as God; to express—1) His sympathy with man; 2) His knowledge of all man felt and suffered. If the ‘Just One’ sighed over the punishment for sin, how much more ought we to enter into the sorrows of our fellow sinners, and to help to bear their burdens? To weep with those who weep.

II. *The dire nature of sin.*—Sin must be a heavy burden indeed, since it so weighed down the innocent and bright nature of our Blessed Lord. He was sinless, and therefore He was free; He entered into the sins of others, therefore He sighed. If the consciousness of the existence of sin so pressed down the soul of Jesus Christ, how much heavier must be the weight of actual sin upon ourselves.

III. *The need of repentance.*—To express that godly sorrow for sin that worketh repentance not to be repented of. To teach us to sigh over the various miseries which sin has brought upon ourselves and the world. That we may learn to hate sin more and more, and to lament over its consequences with broken and contrite hearts.

IV. *His innate pity for sinners.*—Jesus Christ suffered with sinners as well as for them. He unwillingly punished them. (*Isa.* i. 24.) His compassion for sinners corresponds with His hatred for sin. We learn to distinguish principles from persons, from His dealings with sin and sinners.

Epilogue.—The Saviour sighed and healed; whilst we sigh over the evil, let us strive to amend it.

SERMON 525.

THE FOUR VOICES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“He hath done all things well.”—*Mark* vii. 37.

Introduction.—The work proves the artificer; a finished execution proclaims the skilled workman. In the threefold work of creation, preservation, and healing, God proclaims His Almighty power, wisdom, and mercy. He maketh the spiritually deaf to hear, when He speaketh in the four following voices. The sinner must listen to—

I. *The Voice of threatening.*—(*Ps.* xxix. 3.)—‘Waters;’ the people of this world who ebb and flow night and day and never rest; ever dying and being born. ‘Thundereth’ (*Rev.* x. 1-3). The Angel is Jesus Christ, Who cries against sinners, that they may repent, with seven thunders. 1) Plagues, famine, pestilence, etc. (*Ps.* lxxvii. 17, 18.) 2) Fraud, deceit, and detraction (*Jer.* ix. 4; *Rev.* xvi. 18), men divided and separated. 3) Shortness of life. (*Ecclus.* xl. 13.) 4) The severity of the Judge. (*Matt.* xxv. 3.) 5) The swiftness of the Judge, Who cometh in a moment at the time of death. 6) Death itself. 7) Perpetuity of punishment. (*Isa.* xxix. 6.)

II. *The Voice of preaching.*—The preacher preaching the Word of God. This is a trumpet. (*Isa.* lviii. 1; *Joel* ii. 1; *Num.* x. 1-11.) Four uses of the two trumpets. 1) To call the soul to a spiritual war against sin; 2) to prepare for the festival of eternal glory; 3) to tell the people what they ought both to avoid and to do; 4) of repentance, when the sentence of death has gone forth against a guilty soul.

III. *The Voice of crying.*—This is the cry which ascends to heaven from the sins of men. Every sin cries to and calls upon God for its punishment; usury, homicide, Abel’s blood; wages kept back. (*James* v. 14.) Sins of sensuality. (*Gen.* xviii. 20.)

IV. *The Voice of those rising again.*—Very dreadful. When a lioness has had offspring, she cries the first and the second days, and the cubs do not hear her; on the third day they note her cries, and rise up. So Jesus Christ cried to us on the first day of His preaching, on the second day of His Crucifixion, and we heard not; on the third day of Resurrection He will cry, and we shall be compelled to hear and to arise. (*Matt.* xxiv. 31; *Isa.* xxvi. 19.)

Epilogue.—Open now thine ears, and listen to the voice of love.

SERMON 526.

WELL DOING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“He hath done all things well.”—*Luke vii. 37.*

Introduction.—No greater eulogy can be paid to the God-man than this. He was God Who created all things perfectly, of Whom it is written that at the beginning ‘He created,’ ‘He made,’ ‘He saw;’ Who also in ‘the fulness of time’ came in the flesh, furnishing an exemplar of good works; an idea of grace; and a rule of consummate perfection. The old painters and sculptors affixed the imperfect tense, ‘He was making,’ to their works. But the Divine Son of the carpenter not only ‘did’ all things well, but furnished a rule by which we too can imitate Him. We note—

I. *We do nothing well if we fail in any one thing.*—(James ii. 10)—S. Augustine in trouble of soul asked of S. Jerome an explanation of this text, but S. Jerome’s answer is not extant. Achilles was only vulnerable in the heel; and by this part of his body he was slain by Paris. Ajax was invulnerable in his herculean lion’s skin, yet he was slain through the hole in the skin through which he hung his quiver. Goliath was all armed save in the forehead. (1 Sam. xvii. 5, 8, 49.) Ahab was in full armour, except at the joints. (2 Chron. xviii. 33.) The clay in Nebuchadnezzar’s image caused its destruction. (Dan. ii. 33-35.) All parts of the body must be guarded, if life is to be preserved; all the laws of God are to be kept if the soul is to be saved. Samson lost all when he lost his hair; Moses in his heat; the foolish virgins in an hour. S. Peter was compelled to perfect obedience. (John xiii. 8.)

II. *God regards not names but adverbs.*—Not at ‘how much’ but at ‘how well;’ a thing is good from its integral cause, evil from a defect in goodness. All good works are performed in vain if marred by one defect. Jesus Christ did not work *many* things, but ‘*all* things well.’ The ready mind of doing ‘well’ is expressed by the running water of (Lev. xiv. 5, 6). So David with all his powers. (2 Sam. vi. 14.) Abraham drove away the birds as we must all evil thoughts from our prayers and actions (Gen. xv. 11) if we would do ‘well.’

III. *God accepts only pure gifts and things.*—Chief butler and baker dismissed for fly and small stone. (Gen. xl. 2.) Earth as being as yet unformed, separated from the heavens. (Gen. i. 7, 8.) Jesus Christ would not drink the mingled cup. (Matt. xxvii. 34.) Mixed tree alone forbidden in Paradise. (Gen. ii. 17.)

Epilogue.—In all things remember the Apostolic words. (Rom. xii. 2.)

SERMON 527.

THE DEAF MAN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“One that was deaf.”—*Mark vii. 32.*

Introduction.—(Exod. iv. 11.)—Generally true. Tradition says that the mute in the Gospel fell into this state by the agency of Satan, who renders us deaf in four ways.

I. *To the voice of conscience.*—Crying out against the fear of condemnation and the sorrow for past sins. Conscience is indeed the voice of the bittern (Zeph. ii. 14), and ‘the windows’ are our bodily senses. This voice Balaam stifled after all God’s warnings, and he perished miserably in consequence.

II. *To the voice of the Word of God.*—Speaking with profit for amendment of life; not to the hearing of it—1) From curiosity; 2) habit, or; 3) for criticism. (Isa. xlii. 19, 20.) Such disobedient hearers are reproved (Prov. xxviii. 9; Ps. lxxxi. 11); such fell into grievous sin. (Rom. i. 21-29.)

III. *To the voice of his brother.*—Asking pardon for offences against him. Such are deaf to (Luke vi. 27, 28); and are unmindful of (Gal. v. 26); they receive into their souls the poison of the old enemy of man, who delights in anger.

IV. *To the voice of the poor.*—Lest compassion for them should obtain pardon from God. (Prov. xxi. 13.) In the case of Cornelius his almsgiving (Acts x. 31) procured for him grace to know God, and the mystery of the Incarnation, and to come to baptism.

Epilogue.—(Isa. xxxv. 5.)—‘They who were not able with their deaf ears to hear the words of Scripture, are now gladdened by the precepts of God.’ (Jerome.) ‘Take heed how ye hear,’ and listen to the several voices of God.

SERMON 528.

THE OCCASIONS OF SIN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“He took Him aside from the multitude.”—*Mark* vii. 33.

Introduction.—‘The multitude’ well represents the mass of the ungodly, from whom the faithful ought to be separated, lest they fall into sin. We ought to be kept ‘aside’—

I. *At the beginning of sin.*—1) Wickedness is crushed in its growth, and is hindered in its seed. (*Cant.* ii. 15.) The ‘little foxes’ are temptations in the bud. 2) The serpent can creep in anywhere; and if his head be not cut off, the serpent of wickedness will enter into the soul. 3) (*Ps.* cxxxvii. 8.) The ‘daughter of Babylon,’ is a soul which having given way to desire is now filled with sins or ‘confusions;’ for Babylon means confusion. 4) (*Exod.* i. 16.) As Pharaoh killed the male Hebrews, lest they should make war upon him, so ought we to kill temptations in their infancy, lest they grow up and overpower us. 5) (*Gal.* iv. 29, 30.) ‘Sarah’ signifies right and holy desire, which is not to be mocked at by the Ishmael of sin; but while the ungodly son is young he is to be cast out of the soul, driven from the home. 6) Sin is a spark, which if not quenched at the first, leads to a great fire. Had Eye quenched the spark of desire, and Cain, that of envy, neither disobedience nor fratricide would have come into the world.

II. *From all the occasions of sin.*—These throw many who are constant and firm in the life of holiness into deadly sins. 1) David and Bathsheba; 2) Samson and Delilah; 3) Balaam, and the continued solicitations of Balak and the Midianites. Lot was not merely delivered from Sodom, but was placed at Zoar where no spark of the fiery ashes could fall upon him.

Epilogue.—A council of spiritual persons was held as to the best thing to be done under temptation. One said ‘I place before myself the deformity of my sin, which is abominable both to God and to man.’ Another said, ‘I implore on my knees, with tears, the Divine help, till the temptation be past.’ Another, ‘I close the doors of the soul with both holy desires and thoughts, and say, Depart, depart, this place of lodging is occupied.’ All approved of this last advice as being the best.

SERMON 529.

GOD'S PERFECT WORK.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“He hath done all things well.”—*Mark* vii. 37.

Introduction.—The poor ignorant multitude were constrained so to cry out when they witnessed one, and that not one of the most wonderful, of the miracles of the Lord. We, with our larger vision, and with a range which sweeps over horizons of which they had no conception, we should feel the same joyful thankfulness. God did ‘all things well,’ in the—

I. *Creation of the World.*—He, the most powerful, wise, and best Artificer, could not but produce a work which was the reflex of His own good and glorious mind. Hence (*Gen.* i. 37). Cold cannot proceed from heat, nor darkness from the sun. Moses acknowledged (*Deut.* xxxii. 4), and David. (*Ps.* civ. 24.) The more God’s works are studied, whether in their greatness or their minuteness, the more wonderful do they appear. Nature is one long parable, unfolding the mind of God.

II. *Moral and physical government of the world.*—As wonderful as to create, so to ordain cause and effect; force and the law of forces, that all things work together after a fixed order and degree; so that there is no confusion or irregularity in the physical world; that every effect shall proceed from its proper cause. (*Ps.* cxix. 90, 91.) Order and law are ordained for the moral as well as for the physical world. Sin is only a disturbing cause; an exception to the rule.

III. *The reparation of the human race.*—That as (*1 Cor.* xv. 21) our race fell through one man, so by one man, God and man, the ruin should be restored, in order that this redemption should be received by all without respect of persons.

IV. *The miracles of Jesus Christ.*—Signs of—1) power; 2) love; 3) hope. (*John* v. 36.) Each miracle was a blessing to man.

Epilogue.—The consideration of God’s perfect work should incline us to—1) Love Him; 2) obey Him; 3) seek to imitate Him as far as in us lies.

SERMON 530.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*
Ser. X.)

“And again departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon . . . the dumb to speak.”—*Mark* vii. 31-37.

Introduction.—Sunday is especially the day to be given to the soul, as other days are given to the body. During six days we are engaged in storing up and making provision for the body; but on the first day we ought to lay up a store of spiritual truth, upon which the soul can feed during the rest of the week. Let us now equip the horses and chariot of the mind, the intellect, the will, and the memory, and let us collect and store up in our hearts saving grain. We learn—

I. *From our Lord Jesus Christ.*—1) Unwearied diligence in doing good. Within the borders of Tyre and Sidon Jesus Christ heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter; and outside them the deaf and dumb man. (*Acts* x. 38.) Like the sun, He went everywhere; enlightening, cherishing, and making fruitful; like the sun, pouring out His rays of love and healing upon all. Theophrastus being asked by one, how he could preserve life, answered, ‘By showing kindness.’ Alex. Severus said, that the best man was he who retained his friends by gifts, who courted his enemies by benefits, and who was at peace with himself. 2) Love. If Jesus Christ took so much pains for a poor deaf and dumb body, what pains will He not take for the salvation of an immortal soul? 3) Humility. He charged them not to make the miracle known. (*v.* 36.) So also did Samson about the young lion. (*Judges* xiv. 6.) An ambitious seeking for honour or applause, spoils any good work.

II. *From the multitude.*—1) Brotherly kindness. ‘They bring,’ etc. So ought we to seek to bring others to the faith. Jesus Christ says to us that which Joseph said to his brethren. (*Gen.* xliii. 3.) So did the men in the land of Gennesaret. (*Matt.* xiv. 35.) 2) Gratitude. ‘They published it,’ to bring glory and honour unto Him. The value of thanksgiving: all the Hebrew feasts were acts of thanksgiving. (*Ps.* lxvi. 15.) 3) Praise. ‘He hath done all things well.’ 1) He is immense and infinite in His goodness. 2) His benefits are great, and innumerable. 3) All creatures praise God in their beauty, order, and number.

III. *From the deaf and dumb.*—To open all the several senses which sin has closed: the eyes, to see God by faith; the ears, to hear His word; the mouth, to pray and praise; the hands, to almsgiving; the nose, to discern the bad odour of sin.

SERMON 531.

FAITHFUL ABRAHAM.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

"To Abraham and his seed were the promises made."—*Gal.* iii. 16.

Introduction.—These promises were of eternal life to Abraham and his followers, under an earthly figure. The 'Bosom of Abraham' is the rest of souls. (*Luke* xvi. 22.) Yea, they were more than promises; they were oaths. (*Gen.* xxii. 16.) To us, as to Abraham, obedience brings the blessing of eternal life in its train. Our race is for ever blessed in Abraham for Jesus Christ. (*Heb.* ii. 16.) We note five causes of this blessedness which was vouchsafed to Abraham.

I. *He was a follower of peace.*—(*Gen.* xiii. 7-9.)—We ought not only to accept peace, but to follow after it, and to buy it. (*Rom.* xiv. 19; *Heb.* xii. 14; *Ps.* xxxiv. 14.) Hence the beatitude. (*Matt.* v. 9).

II. *He was a faithful man.*—(*Gen.* xiv. 14.)—Not much sympathy between Himself and Lot. Yet he was faithful to Lot in his misfortune. (*Prov.* xvii. 17.) Not given to change; one in whom both God and man could trust. Abraham, was constant alike under trial, in friendship and in faith.

III. *He was a liberal man.*—(*Gen.* xiv. 21-23.)—Being unwilling to sell or make a gain of his services, He felt it 'more blessed to give than to receive.' He knew 'the liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.' As he had freely received bounties from God, so he freely gave of them to others, and 'this man was blessed in his deeds.'

IV. *He was a kind-hearted man.*—(*Gen.* xx. 17.)—He prayed for his enemy Abimelech. Kindness is an abundant goodness, which overflows the banks of our souls, and flows even to our enemies. 'The quality of mercy is not strained' or stinted.

V. *He was a man of great compassion.*—(*Gen.* xviii. 32.)—He pleaded hard, himself being righteous, for wicked Sodom. So we should feel all sorrow and kindness for sinners whilst hating sin.

VI. *He was a man of hospitality.*—(*Gen.* xviii. 2-9.)—Hence the command. (*Heb.* xiii. 2.) In his own person he exercised the rites of hospitality.

Epilogue.—The friend of God is for all time the friend of man too. Love to God is joined with love to others.

SERMON 532.

THE TERRIBLE CONCLUSION.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The Scriptures hath concluded all under sin.”—*Gal.* iii. 22.

Introduction.—Our three personal and essential good things are—1) The body; 2) the soul; 3) and temporal life. Riches, honours, offices, etc., are but accidental possessions. The body, the house of the soul, is formed before it is inhabited (2 Cor. v. 1); formed out of existing material. The substance of the soul is created. (Gen. ii. 7.) A great difference between ‘formed’ and ‘breathed.’ Body, soul, and life are all concluded or shut up under sin.

I. *The body is concluded under death.*—Every one born into this world is called upon to die. (Heb. ix. 27; Rom. v. 12.) Adam summed up the sin of Eve; therefore (Ps. lxxviii. 50). Through Grace, the body has the promise of a glorious resurrection. We were, before our Baptism, children of sin and of wrath. Now (John i. 12; Rom. viii. 16). The conclusion of Holy Scripture is only reversed under the one condition of (John iii. 5).

II. *The soul is concluded under hell, or hades.*—The rational souls of all before the Advent were in hell, or hades. (Ps. lxxxviii. 48.) So (Lam. iii. 9). ‘Hewn’ or square stones—1) Baptismal purity; 2) general obedience; 3) sacramental repentance; 4) martyrial patience. The Scriptures of the Old Testament brought the soul in guilty of deadly sin; consequently of hades, as a result of final repentance. Jesus Christ came into the world to become a new way of life; to lead the soul onward to life eternal.

III. *The life is concluded under the Judgment.*—Life is a great gift, in which, according to the freedom of the will, we can do ill or well; but it ends in the Judgment; for which it behoves us personally to prepare, as having to give a strict account of thought, word, and action. Jesus Christ lends the time of life to us, some ten or twenty years; He does not give it, because it is His own; He lends it, that we may make gain and profit of it. Badly used, He shortens the loan. (Rev. x. 6.) Hence ‘make a chain,’ or conclusion (Ezek. vii. 23); the crimes that stain the soul and the iniquity hindering grace.

Epilogue.—1) Note the terrible nature of sin which hath so encompassed man’s three essential blessings. 2) Seek for that penitential pardon by which we may escape from these punishments.

SERMON 533.

GAINING HEAVEN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life.”—*Luke x. 25.*

Introduction.—A question, most needful for every one to ask; and the answer to it can be given from a sentence of S. Bernard, who proposes the following ways by which eternal life, or the kingdom of heaven, can be gained.

I. *Buy it.*—‘Give earth and receive heaven; give money and receive a kingdom; give a little and receive the whole.’ (Pet. Chrysol.) ‘Heaven is a mercantile negotiation; give bread and receive paradise; give a small thing and receive a great; give mortality and receive immortality.’ (Chrysos.) Jesus Christ values the kingdom of heaven at the half of all possessions (*Luke xix. 8*); also at two mites (*Mark xii. 44*); and at a cup of cold water. (*Matt. x. 42.*) Hence the advice. (*Matt. xxv. 9.*) The oil of love is bought by an enlarged sympathy and help of others. Note (*Luke xi. 41*). Case of Cornelius. (*Acts x. 31.*) Hence the counsel to Nebuchadnezzar. (*Dan. iv. 27.*)

II. *Earn it.*—Labour for it by diligence and obedience. (*Matt. xix. 17*; *Prov. vii. 2.*) Hence (*Exod. xxv. 11*) the ark contained the tables of the law, which were spiritually surrounded with a crown of life. Life, the time of work and labour (*Phil. ii. 12*); and heaven the state of rest. God’s commandments are not grievous. (*1 John v. 3.*)

III. *Steal it.*—1) By theft: as many do who are ashamed either of themselves or of Jesus Christ; as (*Matt. ix. 20*); also Naaman in the house of Rimmon. (*2 Kings v. 18.*) 2) By violence. (*Matt. xi. 12.*) S. Stephen, who reprov’d the Synagogue, and saw heaven opened. (*Acts vii. 51-56.*) Nicodemus, who, secretly at first, but afterwards confessed Jesus Christ. (*John xix. 39.*) So also the penitent thief. (*Luke xxiii. 42.*)

IV. *Beg it.*—By humble, assiduous, and earnest prayer. Like the widow. (*Luke xviii. 5*) Friend’s importunity. (*Luke xi. 8.*) Anna opened heaven by prayer night and day. (*Luke ii. 37.*) The prayer of the righteous is the key of heaven; prayer ascends, and the mercy of God descends. (Aug.)

Epilogue.—With these means, and the blessed help of Jesus Christ, no one can say that the kingdom of heaven is closed.

SERMON 534.**THE WOUND OF ORIGINAL SIN.—***(Holy Gospel, Ser. II.)*

“Wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead.”—*Luke x. 30.*

Introduction.—(Job xvi. 12-15.)—Expresses God's dealings with our race after the fall of Adam; thrust down, broken up, wounded, provoked by many bruises, like the poor man in this day's Gospel. Let us look now at the chief of these wounds, and at the remedy for them which is furnished by Jesus Christ.

I. The understanding is wounded.—1) By ignorance, in infants, who know not their own mother. 2) By dulness, in adults, and by difficulty in learning. 3) By error, concerning God, assigning the power of creation to stocks and stones. 4) By uncertainty, concerning our last end, not only in supernatural, but in natural things; hence the various opinions of philosophers upon death, happiness, etc. 5) By deception, in natural things, which so frequently require to be corrected. 6) By the want of self-knowledge; of our nature; of the relation between soul and body. 7) By our loss in connecting the means with the end. 8) By our curiosity, in searching into others' affairs and the neglect of our own. 9) By the distractions of the vainest and most ridiculous thoughts. 10) By the impediments to knowledge which the body presents, requiring rest, relaxation, etc. (Ps. xlix. 20).

II. The will is wounded.—It now inclines naturally to sin rather than to holiness. Effects of this are—1) Turning away from God's love and worship. 2) Undue love of self. 3) The difficulty we find in overcoming sin, and in gaining graces and virtues.

III. The senses and appetites are wounded.—1) The outward senses: many are born blind, dumb, and lame; all this is one effect of original sin. 2) The inward senses: firstly, by illusions and phantasms, sleeping and waking; secondly, by impediments which take away the interior sense of the mind. 3) The appetitive senses, by which we desire what is wrong, and are cowards and disobedient.

IV. The body is wounded.—1) By diseases; 2) by the remedies of disease; 3) by insufficient food and clothing; 4) by too hard labour; 5) by the shortness of life; 6) by continued fear of death.

Epilogue.—Jesus Christ came to heal all these wounds.

SERMON 535.

OUR NEIGHBOURS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Who is my neighbour?”—*Luke x. 29.*

Introduction.—This seemed too light a question for a lawyer to ask. The very brutes could answer it and say, each after their own kind, let them come from where they will. It is the haughtiness and arrogance of man which has so blinded him, that he needs to ask this question. Woe to us at the last, if we need, either theoretically or practically, to make the same inquiry. Let each class of men ask for themselves now, ‘Who is my neighbour?’

I. *The nobles.*—Answer: the mean and ignoble; the rustic in the village. If two travel a long way together from the same place, and one stayed in the valley whilst the other ascends the hill, would he not ask of any coming up after him: ‘Where is my neighbour?’ Peer and peasant are travelling along together from the field and farm of Adam, over many mountains and valleys to an eternal home, and shall the peer who has doubled this world’s hill of greatness, never ask after his neighbour whom he left in the lowly valley? There is no king that has not descended from peasants, and peasants from kings. The great mountains of pride and haughtiness will one day be laid quite low. (*Zech. iv. 7.*)

II. *The rich.*—Answer: the poor. Giving away to the rich, like himself, he carries the gift to his own house with thanks; to the poor he carries it to your own house, for in heaven you find your bounty. (*Luke xiv. 12-15.*) The Samaritan was a true neighbour; Dives was no neighbour, not even to his five brethren. (*Luke xvi. 28.*) In the old fable of the blind carrying the lame, the blind are the rich (*1 Tim. vi. 9.*); and the lame and weak, the poor.

III. *The prosperous and happy.*—Answer: the unfortunate and solitary. The changes of life often cause a reverse of fortune, and the last becomes the first: hence the Romans worshipped ‘*Fortuna Viscata*’—Fortune limed. A Sultan, a captive of the French, laughed when he saw a wheel in rotation; it reminded him of the vicissitude of things, he said.

IV. *The Good and Righteous.*—Answer: sinners. The Samaritan would seem an unholy outcast to the Jewish lawyer. If a fellow soldier, standing before you in battle, was wounded first, you would say that your neighbour was wounded. So of a fellow sinner wounded in the battle with sin. (*Isa. i. 9.*)

V. *All men.*—Answer: your enemies. The surgeon often by very sharp treatment cures some old wound.

Epilogue.—We are neighbours one of another; one family in Jesus Christ.

SERMON 536.

THE SINNER'S NEED.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“A certain Samaritan as he journeyed . . . had compassion on him.”—
Luke x. 33.

Introduction.—Good news, oh, sinners! Good times! Take courage! The heavenly Samaritan, Who is rich in mercy, clearly shows that the more our unhappiness is hidden in the darkness of sin the more He suffers and sympathises with it. Adam, the man; going from Jerusalem, a state of grace; to Jericho, a state of sin; falls amongst the robbers, who are the lost spirits; the Priest and Levite are the old law which could not save; the Samaritan is Jesus Christ, Who mercifully cures and faithfully guards us all; the ‘wine’ is His Blood, by which our wounds are cleansed; the ‘oil,’ His mercy and pity. Listen to-day, and it will be seen with what earnest longings and benevolence Jesus Christ desires to heal the wounds of the sinner, who is rendered by sin so helpless as to need—

I. *The help of God.*—The man would have perished without the Samaritan’s help. Sinners’ wounds are fatal ones if the Samaritan heals them not. Sin is a well whence there is no escape without help; life is soon lost, but it cannot be recalled. Sin is a net (*Job* xviii. 8), no self-liberation when once caught. It is the mercy of God, which calls, warns, excites, and helps us in proportion to our infirmities.

II. *The internal inspirations of His Spirit.*—These bid the sinner look and mark—1) The misery of life; 2) the presence of death; 3) the final Judgment; 4) the eternal sentence for weal or woe. These thoughts are the salves and plasters for thy wounds, O sinner. Mark the inward calls to amendment of life; adversities, sickness, losses, and the example of others. (*Isa.* xlix. 15.) Alas! the Divine Majesty compares us to infants in defilement; in utter helplessness as to food, motion, protection, or any other need.

III. *The consent of his will to that of God.*—The wounded man must accept the help of the Good Samaritan—1) Gladly; 2) humbly; 3) thankfully; he must feel deeply, and lament heartily, over the time when he was all but lost through falling into his own particular sin. He hears now, and he obeys the voice of Jesus Christ calling him to repentance.

Epilogue.—Flee from the false father, the cruel robber. He deceives you. Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, He is your Father, your true Brother. (*Matt.* xi. 28.) You know the friendly cry; it is that of Him to whom you belong, body, soul, and spirit.

SERMON 537.

THE FATAL JOURNEY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho,” etc.—*Luke* x. 30.

Introduction.—This Parable can be understood either of Adam and the Fall which produced original sin; or, of man in his present estate. Now consider it in the latter meaning.

I. ‘*A certain man went down.*’—Man, who after having the received the absolution of Holy Baptism, fell from a state of grace into the ruin and condemnation of sin. This going down is—1) Frequent; 2) easy; 3) ruinous.

II. ‘*From Jerusalem.*’—The ‘vision of peace.’ As long as man continues in the rectitude of righteousness and baptismal grace, rightly, he may be said to remain spiritually in Jerusalem; he has peace; in himself in his own conscience; with his neighbour by mutual love; with God by his holy obedience. (Ps. cxix. 165; Isa. xlviii. 22.)

III. ‘*To Jericho.*’—The city of sin over which Satan reigns; which like the ‘moon’ is subject to change. Thither descends man when he is overcome by the lusts and desires of this world. A fearful descent from righteousness to unrighteousness; from the Sonship of God to that of Satan; from the childhood of grace to that of wrath; from the citadel and stronghold of grace and holiness to the gulf and abyss of sin.

IV. ‘*And fell among thieves.*’—Evil spirits, into whose hands he betrayed himself by his consent to sin; else they had no power to harm. (James iv. 7; Eph. iv. 27.) The enemy is really weak who does not conquer us save by the consent of the will.

V. ‘*Which stripped him of his raiment.*’—As assassins and highwaymen despoil, so Satan’s emissaries strip their victims of the comely and white robe of baptismal innocence; of all former gifts of holiness and of grace. (Ezek. xviii. 24-26.)

VI. ‘*And wounded him.*’—By the suggestions of sin which abiding in the soul, poison it, leading to the habit of sin which is death.

VII. ‘*And departed leaving him half dead.*’—Having placed him in snares and slain his soul.

Epilogue.—Avoid the beginnings of sin.

SERMON 538.**THE WAY OF LIFE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)**

“What shall I do to inherit eternal life.”—*Luke x. 25.*

Introduction.—This question of the lawyer is a most important one, since it applies to the happiness and ultimate end of man, for which he was created, and also to the means by which this end can be obtained. The Lord's answer implies that man has freedom of will, according to which he either will or will not walk in the way of life. God never forces any one; He never infringes upon the prerogative of the freedom of man's will. Hence (*Deut. xxx. 15, 19, 20*). Heaven and earth and all creation, are witnesses either of man's loving gratitude, or of his rebellious ingratitude. This life that flows from obedience, is—

I. *A true life.*—A real and ‘eternal life.’ ‘Thou shalt live,’ and never die; the life of Jesus Christ; a life in the nature of God, and fashioned after His attributes. This is that life which Jesus Christ came to bring into the world, and which He bestows by His grace; giving the means of man's attaining to it.

II. *A righteous life.*—All the parts of it are balanced, and are in a strict harmony in relation—1) To God Himself and His requirements; 2) to man himself, and the developments of his several faculties; 3) to our neighbours, and all those relationships upon which the moral relations of man are based: a righteous and harmonious life.

III. *A holy life.*—Righteousness and justice lead on to holiness, or consecration to and communion with God. Holiness is the effect of righteousness. The holy soul is a soul which is entirely dedicated to God's honour and glory.

IV. *A divine and blessed life.*—It is the life of heaven in part begun on earth; a life hid with Jesus Christ, now glorified, in God the Father's glory.

Epilogue.—Man ought to be drawn to obedience, either by love or by fear. (*Ps. cxix. 21.*) Explain the ‘flying roll,’ really many-sided. (*Zech. v. 1-5.*) The law of the Lord is a roll flying everywhere, and bringing blessings both temporal and eternal to the children of God; and bringing absolute and certain destruction to the hardened and the wicked, who have not known ‘the way of life.’

SERMON 539.

THE VICTORY OVER SELF.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“Go and do thou likewise.”—*Luke* x. 37.

Introduction.—The ‘prophets and kings’ of (*Luke* x. 24) are the prophets and righteous men of (*Matt.* xiii. 17). According to S. Greg. Mag. and Ven. Bede, S. Matthew would explain, S. Luke to teach, that they alone who are just and holy, are called kings by Jesus Christ; true kings, because they rule over themselves. They are great kings who refuse to yield to temptation, but, on the other hand, rule over them all. Hence (*Rev.* i. 5) redeemed from sin to conquer our old nature; to be restored to our old kingly rule. (*Gen.* i. 28.)

I. *Examples of self-victory.*—1) Saul lost his self-victory, and only two years out of fifty are recorded by time (*1 Sam.* xiii. 1), for David soon rose up. (*1 Sam.* xxiv. 8.) 2) David gained more by dancing before the ark (*2 Sam.* vi. 16) than by slaying the lion, and bear, and Philistine. ‘He overthrew his enemies in fight; in dancing before God he overcame himself.’ (*Greg.*) 3) Joseph resisted temptation, and was made great in Egypt. 4) Abraham overcame his love of home, of son, his anger at Lot’s herdsmen, etc.; and so (*Gen.* xvii. 6, 9). ‘Kings,’ those whom God honours for their conquest over self; which conquest makes them holy. 5) (*2 Kings* xi. 12.) Showing that self-government by this ‘testimony,’ this Mosaic law, was the safeguard of the throne. 6) Mary Magdalene began a self-victory, when she entered the house of the Pharisee. (*Luke* vii. 37.) 7) Joseph of Arimathæa, when he begged the body of Jesus Christ (*Mark* xv. 43) so boldly. 8) Zacchæus, when he braved the laughter of the people to get near to Jesus Christ. (*Luke* xix. 2.)

II. *Rewards of self-victory.*—1) The ministry of angels. (*Matt.* iii. 11.) 2) The eternal crown, which is given to the victors. 3) Co-heirship with the august inhabitants of heaven. 4) The favour and delight of God. 5) The comfort of conscience as before Him.

Epilogue.—Consider the promises to the self-conquerors: the tree of life (*Rev.* ii. 7); freedom from second death (*Ib.* 11); hidden manna and new name. (*Ib.* 17, 27; iii. 5, 12, 21.)

SERMON 540.

THE VISION OF FAITH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life.”—*Luke* x. 25.

Introduction.—The Lord blesses those who look upon Him with the eye of faith. The ancient kings and prophets desired both to see and to hear God in the flesh; and if they had so great a desire from a promise only, how much greater love and affection ought to be in ourselves since the promise has been fulfilled, and we can now by faith see Jesus Christ in person. This vision by faith of Jesus Christ will benefit us in three ways, for it will induce—

I. *Penitence for past transgressions.*—(*Ezek.* xliii. 10.)—‘Son of man,’ the preacher shows the house; the body of the Lord, the temple (*John* ii. 21); that we may by looking at Him be ashamed of our iniquities. The sight of goodness and holiness ever convicts guilt; the mean are confounded in the presence of the liberal; the impure in the presence of the pure. (*Isa.* xxvi. 17, 18.) ‘In Thy sight, O Lord, we have been with child,’ and have brought forth fear and compunction of soul. (*Job* xxiii. 16.) Look at the sorrows of Jesus Christ, which sin brought to Him, and then see that thou add not to His pain.

II. *Patience towards all our adversaries.*—(*Heb.* xiii. 3; *1 Pet.* ii. 21, 22).—Look at Jesus Christ upon the Cross, saying (*Luke* xxiii. 34). In Him patience towards—1) False accusers; 2) contradiction; 3) imputers of wrong motives; 4) murderers; 5) slanderers. None of these moved Him to any impatience. Shall we be impatient under our slight grievances?

III. *Diligence in all good works.*—Jesus Christ was so diligent in the salvation of our souls, that we must be careful lest we undo His work by our careless sloth. (*1 Cor.* vi. 19, 20; *Heb.* xii. 1, 2.) Jesus Christ shows to thee His hands, that thou mayest be diligent in working; His feet, that thou mayest go where He leads. No one looking earnestly upon the life of labour led by Jesus Christ could be idle and negligent.

Epilogue.—Fly to this vision of Jesus Christ in times of—1) temptation: He was tempted; 2) of sorrow: He sorrowed, unto death; 3) of weakness: He was wearied; and you will find your gain.

SERMON 541.

THE VISION OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see.”—*Luke x. 23.*

Introduction.—The Church militant, in her present condition, cannot see Jesus Christ with the eyes of the flesh; that sight, so full of grace and glory, belongs to the Church triumphant. She ought, therefore, with the eyes of faith and love, with the organs of the soul, to behold Him after the spirit. Many an earnest soul is looking thus at Him all their lives. To such as these Jesus Christ is—

I. *A Merit.*—He deserves so much at our hands, so far more than we can ever pay Him back again for all that He has done and suffered for us. He is our Merit too; us all unworthy He hath made worthy. His compassion is my merit and desert, for I am not devoid of merit as long as He is not without compassion for and mercy towards my sins. By His merits we can draw nigh to God: we are accepted in the Beloved.

II. *A Helper.*—(Ps. cxviii. 6).—He became so because (Isa. lxiii. 5) He helps us—1) from death to life; 2) from sin to holiness; 3) from earth to heaven. He helps us by means which carry us above and beyond the range of nature.

III. *A Remedy.*—(John iii. 14).—The Physician of souls: healing all that are oppressed, and all the spiritual sicknesses among His people; curing the threefold disease of—1) Sin; 2) sorrow; 3) death.

IV. *A Reward.*—(Gen. xv. 1).—Having Him, we have all things. 1) Life; 2) peace; 3) grace; 4) glory. A sense of pardoning love here; of eternal joy hereafter.

V. *A Mirror.*—Looking into which we can see an image of the perfect life: the fairest form of all the Sons of men, and are changed ourselves into that likeness. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

Epilogue.—Of these things seen, some are to be feared, and others looked for and believed.

SERMON 542.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“He turned Him unto His disciples . . . do thou likewise.”—*Luke x. 23-38.*

Introduction.—This Gospel presses hard upon such preachers as are willing to conceal and slur over the faults of their hearers, rather than to point out any remedies for the cure of their sins. Of such teachers (*Ezek. xxxiv. 4*). Strive ye preachers to avoid the condemnation of the priest and Levite; rather let your doctrine, as a stream of wine and oil, flow into the vessels of all hearts, as did Elisha's. (*2 Kings iv. 3-7*.)

I. Princes and Prelates learn.—1) Modesty. Our Lord does not mention Himself, His Person, or His work, only ‘the things.’ When He does name Himself to uphold His authority in it is always, the third person. (*Mark ii. 28*.) Maximilian I. and Charles V. were wonderful examples of modesty; see the end of their lives. Meekness of manners, and humility of heart, ought to be the distinguishing mark of a prelate. (*Basil.*) 2) Piety, the true worship of God. Not to covet enlarged boundaries, possessions, pleasures, honours, etc., but to be like Abraham (*John viii. 56*); David (*Ps. lxxx. 19*); Moses (*Exod. xxxiii. 12-20*); Zacchæus. (*Luke xix. 2-6*.)

II. Magistrates learn.—1) To rightly correct offenders, using the wine of severity and oil of mercy; as in the Ark were stored up, Aaron's rod and manna; as David's (*Ps. xxiii. 4*) ‘rod’ of correction and staff of support; 2) to guard the districts committed to their care.

III. The clergy learn.—1) That they are ordained to be the physicians of souls; 2) to be liberal to the poor and needy. The bounty of the Samaritan shamed the Priest and the Levite.

IV. The learned learn.—1) Not to despise the ignorant and unlearned. The ignorant Samaritan was immeasurably before the learned priest (*1 Cor. xiii. 2*); 2) to humbly teach others, binding up their wounds of ignorance, obstinacy, and neglect.

V. Physicians learn.—1) With prudence and care to tend the sick; 2) to give all the benefit and their knowledge without respect of persons.

VI. Christians learn.—1) To love God above all things, with a love that casts out sin (*1 Sam. v. 4*); which employs all the faculties (*Exod. x. 26*) of the soul; 2) to love our neighbour, even if he be a personal enemy. (*John iv. 9*.)

SERMON 543.

PATIENCE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Longsuffering.”—*Gal. v. 22.*

Introduction.—Longsuffering is one form of patience, and it implies that quiet endurance which never murmurs at any lot, but holds on with a certain measure of contentment, under every adversity and trial, both spiritual and bodily. Patience is a most solid fruit, hard in the rind or shell, but very sweet in the kernel; sweet, as being rewarded by God’s comfort now, and as leading the way to eternal sweetness by and by. We note four qualities in longsuffering or patience.

I. *It makes us more than strong.*—(*Prov. xvi. 32.*)—It is the higher power to suffer cheerfully than to do great deeds; so that patience is really better than strength. Men have conquered cities, and their fellow men, who never could conquer themselves; yet he who conquers himself, is strong against all others, since he has conquered not a city, but the kingdom of heaven. (*Matt. xi. 12.*)

II. *It makes us very wise.*—(*Prov. xiv. 29.*)—God is of intelligences the most wise, and at the same time the most patient. He waits until the judgment to vindicate His cause. Patience—1) Adds without our labour to the jewels in our crown of glory, which gems, by our anger and complaints, we often cast away; 2) it bids us wisely keep what is left when much may be lost to us, whilst impatience leads us to cast the whole away; 3) making better what is gained, turning evil into good, by the patient bearing of them. (*Rom. viii. 28.*)

III. *It guards us from deadly harm.*—Patience has a greater power of changing ills into blessings than signs and wonders have. To the patient soul applies (*Isa. xliii. 2*): which was fulfilled in Moses, who being a patient man was not burned at the burning bush. (*Exod. iii. 3.*)

IV. *It procures a crown at last.*—(*Matt. v. 10.*)—Applies to the patient under suffering. Patient justice and pressing iniquity never fail. ‘Who of the saints can be crowned without patience?’ (*Ter.*) The crown comes surely at last.

Epilogue.—Let us strive to be patient towards God, towards others, and towards ourselves; to hold our souls in holy patience.

SERMON 544.

THE THREE LIVES.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Walk in the Spirit.”—*Gal.* v. 16.

Introduction.—The entire work, and whole life of man, flows from his substantial spirit. Spirit is the life of the body, which gives power to the senses. The whole life and operation of the body is from the rational soul. (*John* vi. 63.) The mind gives life and power to the body; yet it derives these itself from the Holy Spirit, which gives sight to contemplation; the clear hearing of preaching; the smell for devotion and works of righteousness. If the mind fail by defects or by deadly sin, it loses the substantial Spirit, *i.e.* the Holy Spirit, and it lies dead in the body as the dead lie in the tomb. (*Ps.* civ. 29, 30.) There are three especial walks or lives in the spirit.

I. *The priestly life, which is dangerous.*—Life a glass vessel on the summit of a column, attacked—1) with the stones of scorn: if humble, he is a hypocrite; if he magnifies his office, he is proud. So was Jesus Christ stoned. (*John* xviii. 19; *Lam.* iii. 12.) 2) By the birds; the evil spirits who especially attack God’s servant. 3) By storms and tempests of a most severe scrutiny and a strict retribution, as to how the office has been fulfilled. The preacher gives food to hungry souls, exciting contrition; he gives drink; and he clothes with humility when he induces men to put off pride; so also of the other sins.

II. *The contemplative life, which is delightful.*—Consists in works of the mind. It is an after product. (*1 Cor.* xv. 46.) Leah represents the active, and Rachel the contemplative life (*Gen.* xxix. 27), for whom Jacob served fourteen years, and who was at first barren. Action comes before contemplation. Yet Mary’s was the better part. (*Luke* x. 42.)

III. *The active life, which is laborious.*—Embracing both bodily and spiritual labours. (*Phil.* i. 22, 23.) Corporal works of mercy; giving bread to hungry; spiritual food (*Matt.* xxv. 37, 40); drink to thirsty, satisfying not with words of life; lodging to strangers, by collecting and restraining the wandering souls; clothing the naked by the love of God; visits to sick, by sending food and other necessities; and he buries the dead, who helps the bereaved by his arms. Four wheels (*Ezek.* i. 17) represent active works in different seasons of life.

Epilogue.—Let us walk in God, to God, and towards Paradise, bearing manifold or the handful of good works and the precious fruits of the Spirit.

SERMON 545.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A NAME.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“He was a Samaritan.”—*Luke xvii. 16.*

Introduction.—The name and nature of the Samaritan were both against him, yet his conduct entitled him to honour. In itself neither name nor nature are of any value unless they are vindicated by our deeds and life. (Rom. ii. 28.) If we lead an unholy, and an un-Christ-like life, the plea, ‘I am a Christian,’ so far from saving us, will add to our condemnation. Better to be of a nation and name ever so despised, and to live above it, and worthy of it, than to have a name which is at variance with your life. The Christian name brings much responsibility with it; since it implies—

I. *The gratitude which we owe to Jesus Christ.*—A great condescension that Jesus Christ allows us to bear His Holy Name; for of Christians, it is said. (1 Pet. ii. 9.) ‘Chosen’ by the Father to be conformed. (Rom. viii. 29.) ‘Royal’ is being anointed in Baptism; ‘priesthood’ as offering the sacrifices of a broken heart; prayer, praise, and devotion of service; ‘holy’ (1 Thess. iv. 3); ‘peculiar’ (1 Cor. vi. 20). As the name of Christian includes all these privileges, so ought it to be a spur to our gratitude. (Col. i. 12.) The same day as that on which we are born, God brings into being many thousand souls; many under circumstances of less light and means of grace than we enjoy.

II. *The imitation which is due to Him.*—As Christians are coheirs with Jesus Christ, they must be also imitators of His holiness. (Eph. iv. 1-7.) Ask, Whence came I? Whose name do I bear? How from the waters of Babylon have I ascended to the Israel of Grace. Seneca, when deprived of all things, and about to die, left to his friends ‘the image of his life.’ How much rather did Jesus Christ do this? As formerly sons wore a medallion of their parents round their necks, so ought we to wear the medallion of Jesus Christ upon our hearts.

III. *The worthy bearing of His Name.*—It is one of many. (Rev. iii. 1.) Such—1) Half Christians look towards heaven and earth, and bow down to the Ark and Dagon together. 2) They touch lightly Christian discipline; they wish to be with Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor, not on Mount Moriah. 3) They are unwilling to suffer for His sake; unlike the martyrs.

Epilogue.—See that you rest not in a name, but in a reality.

SERMON 546.

SHUNNING EVIL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“There met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.”—*Luke* xvii. 12.

Introduction.—These lepers were ‘afar off,’ according to the law. (*Lev.* xiii. 46; *2 Kings*, vii. 3.) Leper, a type of the sinner. (*Pet. Blesesen.* Ep. iii.; *Theod.* qu. x. in *Gen.*; *Guerr.* Ser. iv. in *Epip.*) As far as possible, sinners are to be shunned according to—

I. *Moral Law.*—‘Who wishes to live with the innocent is the best mind, and a most beautiful worshipper of God.’ (*Senec.*) ‘When you walk with the wicked you will also become wicked.’ (*Cato.*) ‘One sickly sheep corrupts the whole fold.’ (*Ovid.*) A discussion amongst learned Greeks: ‘What is the most difficult thing in the world?’ *Aristippus* answered, ‘For a good man to preserve his goodness amongst evil men. An imperial law: the governors must purge the provinces of evil men.’ ‘Vice is a contagion, which is communicated by contact.’ (*Zoroaster.*) ‘Iron at last is melted by the fire. Goodness at last melts before the fire of sin.’ (*Isid.*) *Isaiah’s* lament. (*Isa.* vi. 5.) ‘In the midst of unclean people.’

II. *Scriptural Teaching.*—1) *Abel’s* blood cried for vengeance, rendered vindictive from its contact with the ground. The blood cried not from the wound but from the ground. (*Amb.*) 2) Water included in curse. (*Gen.* iii. 17.) The Lord baptized, to sanctify the waters of baptism. (*Amb.*) 3) After three glorious confessions (*Matt.* xxvi. 74; *John* xviii. 25), *S. Peter* denied (*Mark* xiv. 71) *Jesus Christ*, overcome by fear and the unbelief of his present companions. 4) Serpent was made ‘subtle’ (*Gen.* iii. 1) by inflation of the devil. (*Rup.*) 5) *Jesus* was glorified only after the departure of *Judas*. (*John* xiii. 27, 30, 31.) 6) After wicked are sent into punishment, and not before, the righteous will shine. (*Matt.* xiii. 42, 43.) 7) A special protection was granted to *Abraham*, because he was living in the midst of idolaters. (*Gen.* xv. 1; *Dion. Carth.*) 8) Light or angels divided from darkness or demons. (*Aug.*)

III. *Sacred Example.*—1) The Blessed Virgin abode with *S. Elizabeth* three months (*Luke* i. 39, 56, 57.); but she left her before the lying in, declining to be seen by the crowd which would then assemble at the house of *Zacharias*. (*Vir. Antio.*) 2) *Jacob* not buried in Egypt. (*Gen.* xlix. 29, 30.) 3) *Abraham* bidden to migrate. (*Gen.* xii. 1.)

Epilogue.—Ponder upon the Lord’s teaching, (*Matt.* xviii. 8, 9.)

SERMON 547.

THE GREAT DISEASE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“There met Him ten men that were lepers.”—*Luke* xvii. 12.

Introduction.—‘If you wish to be cured you must uncover the wound.’ (Boëtius; *Ecclus.* xviii. 21.) ‘Conversation,’ the whole life of the sinner, his thoughts, words, and deeds. Thoughts, even if unclean; words, if harmful; deeds, including sins of omission and commission. These poor lepers did not hide their wounds and infirmities, but they opened them to Jesus as to their spiritual Physician, and they sought their healing at His hands. Leprosy is a type of sin in three particulars.

I. *It is an incurable disease.*—The leper is scarcely, if ever, able to be cured by human means, just as the sinner needs so sorely divine help. The soul can easily fall into sin by itself, but by itself it cannot return from sin. The Jerusalem Temple was seven years in building (1 Kings vi. 37, 38); but it took forty-six years to be restored. (John ii. 19). Man, before he sinned, was soon created, as the temple of God; but after he has sinned, the work of repentance and reparation is very slow. The fall of the sinner is compared—1) to fish in a net; as being taken in the waters of sensuality; 2) to the elephant, which, when fallen on the ground, cannot rise; such are the really proud; 3) to the broken glass vessel, for the beauty of original purity is not recoverable in this world.

II. *It is a most hateful disease.*—(Ps. xiv. 1; Hos. ix. 10.)—Abominable to look at; sore, foetid, swollen. As men who love the beautiful hate to look upon that which is deformed and ugly, so does God, in His pure nature, hate to look upon sin; for He says (Matt. xxv. 41). Sin is—Deiling. 2) Deforming. 3) Corrupting. 1) It defiles man’s purity; 2) it defiles God’s image in him; 3) it corrupts the affections, the will, and the understanding.

III. *It is a universal disease.*—(Isa. i. 5, 6.)—It binds the feet in a net (Job xviii. 8), so that the sinner cannot walk straight. It rules over the head; it destroys the entire man. The sinner is the slave of as many lost spirits as he has vices. Alexander boasted of his rule and conquest, and then Diogenes told him that he was the slave of pride, ambition, and anger; all of which Diogenes had himself subdued.

Epilogue.—Sinner, come to Jesus Christ; be healed by His help, power, and love.

SERMON 548.

THE FOURFOLD CLEANSING.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”—*Luke* xvii. 13.

Introduction.—Without divine grace man is an image of death; an empty and broken vessel. (Ps. xxxi. 12; ii. 9.) Hence (1 Cor. xv. 10.) To the soul grace is exactly what health is to the body; without one or the other both perish. ‘The sick rich man has money, but not himself.’ (Cato.) For healing it is needful—1) To show the disease to a skilful physician; 2) to observe his directions; 3) to render him substantial gratitude for his cure. To cleanse us from the leprosy of sin, is the great work of divine grace. We note a fourfold cleansing.

I. *The body is cleansed for health.*—Humours must be expelled from the body, and its spots, etc., taken away. Sin spots the soul, which needs its purging too. Leprosy is cleansed (Lev. xiv. 3-9), and the leper dwells ‘without the camp’ (Lev. xiii. 46); just as the sinful soul is cast without the camp and city of God. The ‘two birds’ are contrition and satisfaction; ‘cedar wood’ the Cross, which gives absolution; ‘hyssop,’ humility; ‘seven times,’ the seven blood-sheddings—circumcision, flagellation, ‘crowning,’ bloody sweat, hands, feet, and side. All this done in type. For (1 John i. 7).

II. *The house is cleansed for comfort.*—House cleansed by the besom that we may dwell in it in comfort. The house of the soul must be cleansed by the besom of grace, that Jesus Christ may live in it. Dust is swept into a heap, and then shovelled out of doors; so the sins of the soul are first gathered all together, and then they are cast quite out; not left to continue and defile the chamber, and again to be re-scattered. The will is the shovel which removes what the besom of grace has collected. Jesus Christ only dwells in a pure house.

III. *The grain is cleansed for use.*—The chaff must be separated from the wheat. This was formerly done by a flail. The sinful soul needs thrashing out. In an old penitential picture, a naked man ‘holds an iron scourge’ with four thongs, on which is written, ‘I mourn, I speak, I will, I do.’ Mourn (Ps. vi. 6); ‘speak’ (Ps. xxxii. 5); ‘will’ (1 Cor. ix. 27); ‘do’ (James i. 12).

IV. *The countenance is cleansed for beauty.*—The turmoil of sin always disfigures the face. Judith, about to overcome Holofernes, bathed in Bethesda. (Judith xii. 7.) We, cleansing our hearts by tears, have heaven’s gates opened to us.

Epilogue.—Cleansing grace is the heritage of the faithful.

SERMON 549.

THE LIMITS OF PRAYER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“They lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”—
Luke xvii. 13.

Introduction.—Temporal blessings are not to be prayed for, except they agree with the Divine will, and are profitable for the salvation of the soul. Many abuse their petitions when granted, like these nine lepers, who had better have remained in their old estate, than have laid themselves open to the charge of such base ingratitude as they did on their cure. Many, with vows of amendment of life, pray earnestly when sick; they recover, and then they lapse into their old state. No glory is given to God: the body truly is recovered, but the soul is lastingly injured. It is sometimes out of His great mercy that God refuses to grant our petitions. We note some circumstances of prayer.

I. *Many are better dead than preserved.*—(2 Kings xix. 35-37.)—Why was not Sennacherib slain in this fearful carnage? Why was not his blasphemy punished at once? He was reserved for a worse and more bitter death by the hands of his own sons. Saved by God, he returns again to his old idolatrous life. 1) Life lengthened to the wicked adds to the number of their sins. 2) Life lengthened to the righteous, adds to the number of their sorrows.

II. *Why God hears harmful prayers.*—God does this sometimes—1) In judgment upon the sinner, that he may taste the bitterer punishment. 2) That he may not appear hard and unmindful to the faithful. 3) To lead the faithful to be distrustful of themselves for the future.

III. *Why bidden to pray in secret.*—(Matt. vi. 6.)—1) To avoid vainglory. 2) That none may question the divine mercy by our prayers, so that God may not seem to be unmindful of us, if He refuses any of our petitions.

IV. *We must be careful what we pray for.*—Things wrongly asked are granted to us in punishment for the asking, for what God would not give in mercy He gives in wrath. As (Num. xi. 4, 33.)

V. *We must ask for temporal blessings conditionally.*—Ask for God's mercy to be shown to us in His and not in our own way; as He sees to be good for us, and not as we think will be good for ourselves.

Epilogue.—In prayer, as in all other things, put God's will before your own senses and inclinations.

SERMON 550.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE CURE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“As they went they were cleansed.”—*Luke* xvii. 14.

Introduction.—As leprosy is a type of sin, we learn how sin can be got rid of; we note the conditions upon which the Lord healed these ten men. Four qualifications are needed for such a healing.

I. *Faith.*—(*Luke* xvii. 19.)—For (*Heb.* xi. 6) faith firstly reveals to the sinner the severe judgment of God hanging over him, and the awfulness of His scrutiny, which is called ‘anger’ (*Ps.* vi. 11); and secondly, it leads him to cast himself upon the mercy of God, and to trust in His gracious promises of help and healing, saying, ‘Jesus, Master!’

II. *Humility.*—‘Stood afar off;’ not permitted to come nigh the sane and the healthy. So the sinner feels himself to be unworthy of God’s Presence; he stands ‘afar off,’ from God, His servants, His Church, His Sacraments; till in His mercy, God calls him to Himself, and bids him cast away all his doubt and fear. (*Ps.* li. 17; *Ps.* cii. 17.)

III. *Obedience.*—‘Go show yourselves, etc.’ Had they not assayed to go they would not have been cleansed. Although a miracle had been wrought, the law of leprosy still held good (*Matt.* v. 17), and the law bade (*Lev.* xiv. 21) this be done. Many in the possession of great gifts imagine themselves to be above the law, whether moral or civil. Naaman at first rebelled; he was healed only by obedience. (*2 Kings* v. 12-14.)

IV. *Great desire.*—‘Lifted up their voices’ in earnest eager supplication. ‘O that we could make men as earnest about the life eternal as they are about this temporal life!’ (*Aug.*) They who do the greatest things for worldly ends will not take the smallest trouble for things spiritual. (*2 Kings* v. 13.) Again, they who are most anxious to avoid all bodily diseases, to escape all infection, have no care as to the spiritual and moral infection to which they subject themselves. God often will not hear a prayer which is unaccompanied by the fervent desire of the asker. Great desire is the clamour of the heart which He hears. (*Exod.* xiv. 15.)

Epilogue.—Meet God the Holy Ghost halfway in His Divine influences upon the soul.

SERMON 551.

THE MIDDLE COURSE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.”—*Luke* xvii. 11.

Introduction.—Not through the boundaries, but through the ‘midst,’ to teach us that it is the middle road of grace which leads to Jerusalem (*Isa.* xxx. 21); the ‘Word’ being Jesus Christ declaring both by precept and example the true *via media* which leads to glory. Choose the middle course if possible in all the conditions of life.

I. *In prosperity*.—Agur’s prayer. (*Prov.* xxx. 7-10.) The ship which is unballasted cannot hold her course; and if too heavily laden she is apt to sink; she needs a moderate amount of cargo for safe sailing. This state leads to thankfulness, and it represses covetousness; it belonged to Jacob of old (*Gen.* xxviii. 20-22), and to him who seeks only for food and raiment, desiring nothing more. (*1 Tim.* vi. 8, 9.) The most healthful state, is the mean between wealth and want. (*Plato.* leg. iii.) In it we are saved—1) The burden and care for our substance; 2) the anxiety of want.

II. *In our frame of mind*.—Not unduly exalted by good fortune, or depressed by misfortune, for there is danger in both states which lead either to undue pride or to despair (*2 Cor.* vi. 4-7.); ‘right’ and ‘left’ signify prosperity and adversity. We must walk in a middle course. (*Psa.* xci. 7.) To be prepared to fight the world, etc., with either hand; like Ehud did with his left (*Judges* iii. 15-20); like S. Paul (*Phil.* iv. 11, 12).

III. *In the way of salvation*.—To walk between hope and fear; between presumption and undue diffidence. Abraham dwelt between the house of God and the abyss; between Bethel and Hai. (*Gen.* xii. 8.) The Israelites were at one time despairing, and at another presumptuous. (*Num.* xiv. 2, 5, 40, 45.) Feeling with S. Paul both states. (*2 Cor.* v. 1, and *1 Cor.* ix. 27)

IV. *In the way of daily life*.—Just in all things, not unduly influenced by love or hate; trying to reckon all things by a just—1) Standard; 2) measure; 3) balance.

Epilogue.—Pray for divine grace to keep you straight in the middle way, like the king that brought the ark from Ekron to Bethshemesh. (*1 Sam.* vi. 17.)

SERMON 552.

THE USES OF ADVERSITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“There met Him ten men that were lepers.”—*Luke xvii. 12.*

Introduction.—Strange as it may seem, some have courted disease, trouble, and sorrow, in order thereby to perfect the work of divine grace within them. They have prayed for the things which most persons pray against, and they have found their account in so doing. This leprosy brought several blessings, to one of the lepers at least, and some blessing to them all.

I. *It led to God.*—Several came out of curiosity to hear and see Jesus Christ; but it was only those like the woman, with an issue of blood (*Matt. ix. 20*); the woman of Canaan (*Mark xv. 27*); the palsied man (*Mark ii. 4*); the centurion (*Mark viii. 5*); the ruler of the synagogue (*Matt. ix. 18*); and others in great need, who eagerly came to him. To the King's great supper the poor, blind, and they alone came. (*Luke xiv. 21.*) True generally. (*Isa. xxvi. 8.*) The prodigal, until he fell into sore need, did not think of his father's house. (*Luke xvi. 16.*)

II. *It taught humility.*—‘Stood afar off:’ humbled by their separation from their fellows. Leprosy humbled Uzziah's (2 *Chron. xxvi. 19*) and Miriam's pride (*Num. xii. 1, 10*); it kept Moses himself humble. (*Exod. iv. 6.*) Saul's persecution depressed David to death. (*1 Sam. xxiv. 14.*) Alexander showed a wound to his flattering soldiers, and told them he was but a mere man. The nerve of Jacob's thigh was touched, lest he should attribute his success to his own strength. (*Gen. xxxii. 25.*)

III. *It taught them how to pray.*—‘They lifted up their voices,’ and uttered a fervent prayer, like that of Jonah from the belly of the whale; like that of David in the cave, who prayed (*Ps. lvi. 1*); like that of the Israelites from the depth of their Egyptian bondage. (*Exod. ii. 23.*) Sore affliction opens the lips to prayer.

IV. *It taught obedience.*—‘Go show yourselves,’ and they were healed as they obeyed. It is very difficult to subdue the understanding, and to break in the will. Affliction can alone do this effectually. It made Naaman obedient to Elisha; it compelled Lot to fulfil God's command. (*Gen. xix. 17-30.*)

V. *It taught loving friendship.*—A fellowship of sorrow and suffering. There were nine Jews in company with one Samaritan; yet in ordinary cases (*John iv. 9*).

Epilogue.—Blessings often flow from apparent curses; and misfortunes are often productive of great gain.

SERMON 553.

GRATITUDE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.”—
Luke xvii. 18.

Introduction.—It is an old proverb, that ‘No one so well sacrificed an ox as Pyrrhias.’ (See Classical Dict.) The text applies to this Samaritan Pyrrhias. Seneca said of his day: ‘Almost the whole race of men was ungrateful.’ We note of gratitude, that—

I. *It is conformable to nature.*—In nature every effect is referred to its cause; the benefit ought therefore to be referred to the benefactor as its cause. So of man. (Gen. iii. 19.) A lament. (Isa. i. 2, 3.) Heaven and earth, and oxen are invoked to put man to shame; and that they might read a lesson to man. Gratitude is the moral and lawful development—affection, as 1) children to their parents; 2) kind feeling towards those who have shown kindness to them.

II. *It is most easily rendered.*—If the benefits cannot be returned in kind—1) The benefactor can be praised in thought and word, and can be held in honour and reverence. 2) The benefit can be acknowledged and be received with great feeling. 3) The memory of the benefit can ever be borne in mind, and when so remembered it leads the soul to—1) contentment; 2) forgiveness; 3) a lowly estimate of self.

III. *It is most profitable.*—1) It propitiates the favour of men. 2) It binds the benefactor to the beneficiary. God asks it at our hands, in order that He may bestow greater blessings upon us.

IV. *Ingratitude is most detestable.*—1) It injures the benefactor, as ivy the walls to which it clings; as Balaam his ass. (Num. xxii. 30.) 2) It pains the benefactor. (Isa. l. 1, 3.) So the nine ungrateful lepers. 3) It stays the hand of the benefactor. (Ps. xxxv. 17.)

Epilogue.—Mark the punishment which awaits the ungrateful. (Isa. v. 5, 6.)

SERMON 554.

LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)“And it came to pass . . . made thee whole.”—*Luke xvii. 11-20.*

Introduction.—Jesus Christ is set before us in this Gospel as the Master of these lepers, whom He regarded as His disciples, not by profession but by subjection ; and who, being learned, well-mannered, or obedient and good, were cleansed by Him so that they could again dwell amongst men. We learn in this Gospel—

I. *From the Leprous.*—1) To quickly seek salvation. ‘There met Him.’ They went out to seek and find Him. Many, like the sons of Eli, are lost by delaying repentance. 2) To pray rightly. *a)* They reverently approached the Lord, standing, like the Publican (*Luke xviii. 13*), ‘afar off. *b)* They besought Him fervently ; *c)* they humbly implored His compassion, like the captain did that of Elisha. (*2 Kings v. 1-12.*) *d)* They preferred their petition with resignation, only asking ‘mercy.’ *e)* They prayed in faith ; *f)* with love ; *g)* their petition was the united prayer of all. 3) To feel and to believe rightly concerning Jesus Christ. They called Him not only Saviour but Master, *i.e.* Teacher or Legislator. They acknowledged His—*a)* supremacy ; *b)* power ; *c)* Love. 4) They spared no pains to gain their healing. Contrast the lepers with Naaman. They went without any disputing, or thought of trouble, from Samaria to Jerusalem.

II. *From the Samaritan.*—1) To separate ourselves from wicked companions. He left them, as Noah, and Lot, and Abraham went out from their several homes. 2) To be thankful ; like Noah’s dove, to return with the olive leaf. (*Gen. viii. 1.*) 3) Not to accuse others. The Samaritan silent as to the rest of the lepers.

III. *From Jesus Christ.*—1) To avoid ingratitude ; for Jesus Christ condemned the nine as wanting in giving due glory to God. 2) To render due gratitude for benefits, for He praised the Samaritan, giving him health both of body and soul. 3) That benefactors are—*a)* to expect ingratitude ; *b)* not to be angry ; and *c)* to refer all their benefits to God.

SERMON 555.

THE HOLY CROSS.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*Gal.* vi. 14.

Introduction.—S. Paul gloried in the Cross as being both profitable and useful for salvation, since by It the fruit of eternal salvation has abundantly flowed down to us. In eternal blessedness, a fourfold blessing will come from the Cross, for it will confer in that place of glory—

I. *An admirable dignity.*—Jesus Christ on the Cross was naked, poor, and degraded. They who endure lowliness, who now carry the Cross, shall one day partake of this dignity. (Matt. xix. 28, 29.) ‘They who are now despised for Jesus Christ’s sake shall appear as judges with Him.’ (Aug.) S. Jerome, desiring to be of this number, said: ‘Naked, I follow the naked Cross.’ ‘Before honour is humility.’

II. *An inestimable delight.*—The austerity of grief shone from the Cross; no one ever suffered such a severity of penance for sins as did Jesus Christ for sins of others upon the Cross; the Virgin’s son endured the bitterest pains in all His members; a marked contrast to the voluptuous incontinence of our members. His sufferings ended in the delight of redemption. Our tears of repentance will bring everlasting joy. (Matt. v. 4.) The blessed will rejoice in goodness when they shall have God at will, and enjoy Him for their delight and glory. It is the highest happiness to see God, to live with Him, and to be with Him Who is ‘All in all.’ ‘A multitude of peace to the will; a fulness of light to the reason; an eternal continuation to the memory.’ (Aug.)

III. *A delectable brightness.*—The holy body of Jesus Christ was dishonoured on the Cross, naked; in His love He gave His garments to the crucifiers, and His Body to nakedness and pain for our redemption; now He has the body of His glory. So shall our purity of life, hidden under various forms of sorrow, shine out brightly when the ‘sign of the Son of Man’ comes.

IV. *An imperturbable security.*—The imperturbable security will correspond with the spirit of compassion. In pity we suffer; hereafter we shall be secure in His loving mercy.

Epilogue.—Glory in humility, suffering, and the obedience of the Cross.

SERMON 556.

THE RULE OF HOLINESS.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy.”—
Gal. vi. 16.

Introduction.—‘This rule’ is that of ‘the new creature’ or ‘the Spirit.’ ‘If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.’ (*Gal.* v. 25.) ‘This rule’—the guidance of the spiritual life—is not a thing to stand idly by and to look at, but it is to be used as a means of advance. Walking by this rule we are like S. John Baptist. (*Luke* i. 80.) Many fail in this walk from the following causes—

I. *Their minds are contented with their present state.*—They desire not to walk forwards. (They are satisfied with their present condition. The presumption of perfection hinders many from obtaining it. We are unwilling to become better since we reckon ourselves to need no improvement. Learn what you really are, in order to become that which you are not. This want of desire implies a contempt for spiritual blessings, just as dogs and swine scorn all precious things. (*Matt.* vii. 6.)

II. *Their minds are divided.*—Such try to love the flesh and the Spirit at the same time; to serve two masters; to be of the Church and yet of the world; to walk by the senses and by the Spirit too. Divided allegiance, power, and influence are worthless. Reuben’s failure. (*Gen.* xlix. 3, 4.)

III. *Their minds are weak and fearful.*—Pusillanimity makes a winter to the soul, during which the seed cannot germinate and bear leaves, flowers, and fruit. Many dare not live holily, fearing some trouble and inconvenience therefrom. Such an one feels (*Prov.* xxii. 13); or like Cain (*Gen.* iv. 14).

IV. *Their minds are changeable.*—Sometimes wanting one thing, at other times another. Keeping to a straight course we soon reach the end of our journey and labour. We are not to give up if a difficulty occurs; for if it cannot be overcome to-day, it can probably be conquered to-morrow.

Epilogue.—Place the rule of holiness—the walk of the Spirit—ever before the mind; its trials, dangers, and glorious reward acting upon (*Heb.* xii. 1, 2).

SERMON 557.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CROSS.—(*Epistle*, Ser. III.)

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*Gal. vi. 14.*

Introduction.—The Cross of Jesus Christ represents the discipline of Jesus Christ; the crucifixion of self, in ways many and various: of our fleshly lusts, of our worldly desires, of our unruly wills and tempers. The crucifixion of pride, anger, covetousness, and the like, is a glorying in the Cross of Jesus Christ. There are many Cross-bearers in the world who glory in the Cross; whilst there are others who, unlike S. Paul, bear the Cross, but do not glory in Christ. Of these Cross-bearers we note the—

I. *Obedient Cross-bearer.*—Our Blessed Lord. He willed because of His obedience to bear it. He fulfilled not His own but His Father's will. (*Phil. ii. 8.*) Hence this was a voluntary sacrifice. The principle of obedience was the ruling principle in His holy life. We ought to submit and to discipline ourselves, because it is the will of God for us to do so. Question not, murmur not, but to glory in the Cross by our patient carrying of it.

II. *Penitent Cross-bearer.*—Penitent thief (*Luke xxiii. 40-43*) acknowledged the justice of his sentence: ‘We, indeed, justly.’ A penitent Cross-bearing glorifies the Cross, inasmuch as it produces that ‘godly sorrow that worketh repentance.’

III. *Impenitent Cross-bearer.*—Impenitent thief. (*Luke xxiii. 39.*) Those who will not accept God's fatherly chastisement; who carry the Cross with a hardened and unsubdued heart. Theirs is that ‘sorrow of the world which worketh death.’

IV. *Hypocritical Cross-bearer.*—Simon the Cyrenian. (*Matt. xxvii. 32.*) Those who seem to be carrying a Cross, but it is another's, not their own. They make a show of godliness, but leave the work of it for others than themselves to do.

Epilogue.—Glory in the Cross by bearing all its discipline.
1) Lovingly; 2) patiently; 3) enduringly.

SERMON 558.

THE VALUE OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Is not the life more than meat?”—*Matt. vi. 25.*

Introduction.—The life, or *psuché*, represents the soul as being the principle of life. We can read in Holy Writ, ‘Is not the soul more than meat?’ Adam thought not; Esau thought not; the Israelites thought not. (*Num. xi. 33.*) Many of us are willing to barter our souls for gain, honours, or pleasures; for the smallest crumb of the meat of this world’s folly and sin. Consider, then, how valuable the soul is; for—

I. *A plurality of persons created it.*—Light, the firmament, etc., were all created by a word, but man only after the council of the Ever Blessed Trinity. 1) Wherefore was a council needed by those who cannot err? For a sign of dignity, that man might exist not by the word of command, but by the dignity of the operation. 2) ‘Let Us make;’ that each of the Blessed Ones might have a part in man: the Father creating, the Son redeeming, the Holy Ghost fructifying and quickening. 3) It is honourable to receive money from a prince, but more honourable to receive a ring or a chain. (*Gen. xli. 42; Dan. v. 29.*) The greatest honour of all when an image is impressed, which expresses man as another self; as being capable of all good; as representing God Himself. Oh! defile not this image by sin.

II. *It is more noble than heaven.*—Earth was made for its temporal and heaven for its eternal habitation. The greatness and magnificence of heaven are as nothing when compared with the soul. (*Ps. lxvi. 16; Luke i. 49; John xiv. 12.*) A greater work beyond creating heaven and earth, is, with the help of Jesus Christ, the saving of the soul. By a word He made the heavens; by years of suffering and death He redeemed the soul.

III. *It is the piece of silver of the Parable.*—(*Luke xv. 8-10.*)—Precious as bearing the image of the great King. The woman is the wisdom of God used by the God-man, Who was the candle placed in the candlestick of the Cross; so when she found Adam she seized the broom, and by the example of Jesus Christ saved and rescued the lost soul of man.

IV. *It is fairer than Rachel.*—So our Blessed Lord suffered infinitely more than Jacob for its redemption.

V. *It is all in all to Jesus Christ.*—(*John xiii. 3.*)—Not only omnipotence, omniscience, miracles, etc., but man who sums up and represents all God’s other works. (*1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19, 20; 2 Cor. vi. 16.*)

Epilogue.—Sad thought, that a bad soul is the only thing men are willing to have; which is bad.

SERMON 559.

THE GREAT BUSINESS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.”—*Matt. vi. 33.*

Introduction.—Describe the mission of Eleazar, who was so eager that he put his business before the common needs of life. (Gen. xxiv. 33.) Not a crumb to be eaten before the betrothal had taken place. This was the matter which he had at heart. Are we not sent into the Mesopotamia of this world in order that we may seek eternal blessedness; to be betrothed as a bride for our souls' sakes? (Hosea ii. 19.) With what solicitude ought we to compass this business of businesses. ‘Seek ye first.’ Yet we put it oftentimes last of all. Who ever now heard the sinner say, ‘I will not eat’ before I have repented.’ No. Repentance and the salvation of the soul is our last work. We note, in thinking upon the real business of life, that—

I. *The righteous is provident.*—Abraham receives a command ‘upon one of the mountains.’ (Gen. xxii. 2.) It might be well wooded, but he did not trust to the uncertainty (v. 3), but took the needful wood with him. He could not offer a sacrifice without wood, and if he did not sacrifice he could not obey God’s command. Oh, the provident prudence of Abraham, as compared with the open improvidence of the sinner, who, unmindful of the needs of the place whither he may be going, carries not with him the wood of contrition and of pardon.

II. *The sinner is provident for the body.*—For his castle, his house, his domains, his fields and vineyards, he is prompt enough to act when any emergency may arise; but he holds his soul in such low esteem, that he plays and procrastinates with its all-important affairs.

III. *The soul demands more care than the body.*—When the loved sisters sent to tell the Lord that Lazarus was sick, he abode two days in the same place. (John xi. 6.) They only sent, whilst Jairus and the Centurion came in person. Yet the Magdalene went herself to the Pharisee’s house (Luke vii. 37), to obtain pardon for her sin. They sent to gain life for the body, but she went to gain life for the soul.

Epilogue.—No excuse of want of time to use the means of grace; no excuse of want of means will atone for an unloving spirit hereafter. Oh, give as much care to your souls as to the commonest things of this life.

SERMON 560.

SATAN A BAD MASTER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—*Matt.* vi. 24.

Introduction.—Therefore it is plain that ye ought to serve God. Mammon stands here for covetousness; but it may be extended to all sin and wickedness of which Satan is the head and fount. Satan is a bad master, and is not to be served for several reasons.

I. *He is our enemy.*—'Your adversary, the devil.' (1 Pet. v. 8.) God may well ask, 'Why do you prefer both My and your own enemy, to Myself? He did not create you; he does not preserve you. If these seem small things to you, I add, he has not redeemed you as I have done, neither by silver nor by gold, nor by the sun, nor by the moon, nor by any angel, but by My own blood.' Has he ever done us, or will he ever do us, one single act of kindness?

II. *He is an implacable master.*—Nothing satiates his desire for destruction and revenge. He is melted and made gentle by no service, however faithful and however costly it may be to the server.

III. *He is a heavy task-master.*—An exacter of heavy burdens, oppressing with grievous labours and servitudes. Pharaoh, in his oppression of the Israelites, is a type of him. (Exod. i. 13, 14; v. 15.) So are all they who oppress their inferiors. (Jer. l. 6-17.)

IV. *He is a litigious master.*—He will not allow his slaves to rest from sin: he incites them to add sin to sin; he says (Exod. v. 8), The conscience naturally contradicts him, and then is aroused the strife of (Exod. ii. 11). Hence (Isa. lvii. 20). When Satan is by Divine grace expelled from the soul, then the conflict ceases. A bitter strife. (Prov. xvii. 1.)

V. *He is a niggardly master.*—His pay is bad; he cannot support his servants. He has not a herb or a crumb to give them. For (Ps. xxiv. 1) how can we ask bread of God, whilst we are serving His very enemy?

VI. *He is a cruel and a lying master.*—He gives death and sorrow for his wages (Rom. vi. 2), whilst he promises (Gen. iii. 5); for he is (John viii. 44).

Epilogue.—Every wilful unrepentant sinner owns Satan for his master. Is the sinner, then, wise or foolish?

SERMON 561.

THE OPPOSING MASTERS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“No man can serve two masters . . . ye cannot serve God and mammon.”—
Matt. vi. 24.

Introduction.—God made man that he might understand the highest good; and understanding, love it; and having it he might possess it; and in possessing it might enjoy it for ever. (Aug.) In this Gospel our Blessed Lord by four different arguments sought to lead men's minds from this world to God; that they might love and serve Him here, and so enjoy Him for ever hereafter. Consider to-day the Lord's first argument, since no man can serve—

I. *God and the devil.*—1) God is essentially humble. (*Matt.* xi. 29.) The devil is by nature proud. (*Job* xli. 34; *Isa.* xiv. 13, 14.) ‘Praise is the most manifest sign of the reprobate, and humility of the elect. When it is known what quality is possessed by any one, it is directly to be learned under what king he is serving as a soldier.’ (Greg.) 2) God is essential goodness (*Ps.* cxlv. 9); the devil is essential hate. (*Prov.* xii. 10.) 3) God is essential joy and gladness (*Ps.* xxi. 6); the devil is essential gloom and despair, for with him (*Matt.* xxv. 30).

II. *God and the world.*—1) God loves peace, but the world loves turmoil and persecution. (*John* xvi. 33.) 2) God looks within (1 *Peter* iii. 4), the world regards the without, and it is ‘the pride of life’ (1 *John* ii. 16); of both (1 *Sam.* xvi. 7). 3) God looks at the future He has prepared for man, but we would consider the present time only. (*John* xvi. 20-22.)

III. *God and the flesh.*—1) God commands purity, but the flesh desires pleasure. (*Rom.* vii. 23.) 2) God bids us walk by faith; the flesh by sight, being captivated by the eye; ‘the lust of the eye.’ 3) God bids man raise himself so as to be (2 *Peter* i. 4); the flesh lowers man to the brutes (*Jude* 10.; *James* iii. 15), nay below them in degradation.

Epilogue.—The difference between the nature and dealings of the two masters is manifested in their rewards also. Life, glory, and happiness belong to the one; death, dishonour, misery, to the other.

SERMON 562.

GOD'S THREE BLESSINGS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,”—*Matt.* vi. 33.

Introduction.—(*Rom.* viii. 18.)—None of our good works, in themselves, are of merit, there is no common measure between them and God's demands from us. (*Luke* xvii. 10.) Yet there is a certain congruity between our deeds and our means of doing; and besides all works which are done under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost are thereby acceptable with God, and available for eternal life. (*John* iv. 14.) The deed gains a certain merit from the nature of its doer. If done by (*Rom.* viii. 17) grace working with the doer, ‘the kingdom of God’ can be sought and obtained. This kingdom of God takes the form of three blessings from God to man.

I. *Temporal blessings.*—Undue solicitude about these, leads to mammon worship. This is the case when—1) They are regarded as an end in themselves, and are not sought to be used for the honour of God and the seeker's salvation. 2) They are unduly cared for, and they are often sought for, under the pretext of doing good. 3) Too eagerly worked for under an undue sense of future want, which distrusts God's providence; being forgetful of His greater gifts, and of His care for the inferior creatures.

II. *Spiritual blessings.*—Given as a present reward. Righteousness is the sum and substance of these; a royal road leading to the kingdom of God. It orders a man—1) In respect to himself by judgment and punishment. (*Ps.* cvi. 3; *1 Cor.* xi. 31.) So judged the saints of old, and they punished themselves by fastings, solitude, etc. 2) In respect of his neighbour; a) by communication of substance; b) of sympathy; c) of mutual forgiveness. 3) In respect of God by subjection and love; led neither by fear nor hope but by love alone. Like David (*Ps.* cxix. 127), who humbled himself before the Ark (*2 Sam.* vi. 21, 22), and collected the material for building the temple for God's worship.

III. *Eternal blessings.*—These are earnestly to be sought for. The kingdom of God—1) Before all things. (*Ps.* v. 3.) Manna was gathered early. (*Exod.* xvi. 19; *Pro.* viii. 17.) 2) In all things. (*1 Cor.* x. 31.) 3) With all solicitude. (*Luke* xiii. 24.) 4) On account of its excellency, glory, greatness, and happiness. (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 1, 2.) There, is incomparable glory, undying love, inexplicable sweetness.

Epilogue.—Seek a kingdom which embraces both the present and the future.

SERMON 563.

THREEFOLD SOLICITUDE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“Take no thought.”—*Matt.* vi. 31.

Introduction.—Have no undue care about that which is not in your own power; cast yourself wholly upon God; rest in His justice, goodness, and mercy; wear not your life away upon fruitless care: strive, pray, and trust in God, and rest content, having committed your way unto Him. We note there are three kinds of solicitude.

I. *A solicitude of nature.*—This is that providential care with which God preserves and watches over the works of His own hands. A type of that sober forethought and solicitude which we ought ever to have in respect to our present life. The very curse implied that man was to live by the exercise of forethought and anxiety. (*Gen.* iii. 19.) We all have our due solitudes and cares in life, from which God wills that we shall never escape whilst we are on this earth.

II. *A solicitude of sin.*—When we are unduly solicitous, then our care and over anxiety become sinful. Undue anxiety about wealth leads to covetousness; about food and dress, to gluttony and pride; about deep unrevealed mysteries, to presumption; about the ordinary events of life, to distrust of God, and to a languid unhealthy state of mind. (*Matt.* xiii. 22.)

III. *A solicitude of grace.*—Which consists in a diligent care for the salvation of the soul, and in the doing of works of love and justice to others. (*2 Cor.* xi. 28.) This praiseworthy solicitude is manifested—1) In respect to the soul. (*Deut.* iv. 9.) 2) To one's neighbour; helping his necessities both spiritual and temporal, and preserving peace and concord with him. For (*1 Cor.* xii. 25.) As Martha had to welcome Jesus Christ. (*Luke* x. 40; and *Eph.* iv. 3.) 3) In respect to God: by fearing, worshipping, and loving Him. (*Micah* vi. 8.) Man walks with God by love; therefore (*Josh.* xxiii. 11-16), feeling with Job. (*Job* xxiii. 15.)

Epilogue.—Beware, lest eternal life be lost through an undue solicitude for this present life; care for everlasting rewards more than for present fleeting joys, nor expect rest and security in the midst of so many and great troubles.

SERMON 564.

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)“Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow.”—*Matt.* vi. 34.

Introduction.—No undue and depressing, because over-anxious, thought. Rely not upon human events, which so often deceive; upon friends or relations, who despise when they see you in need; upon fortune, which is as inconstant as a revolving wheel; upon children, who often long for your death, that they may obtain your means; upon riches, which make to themselves wings and fly away; upon honour, which is but smoke and wind: but put all your trust and confidence in God's providential care.

I. *Trust in a merciful First Cause.*—(*Hab.* i. 16.)—The Chaldeans worshipped the effect, and forgot the cause; the fishers their nets; the artisans their tools; the farmers their beasts; the painters their pencils: all ‘took thought’ for secondary, and no thought for primary, cause.

II. *Examples of God's providential care.*—1) Israelites for forty years were guided, guarded, clothed, and fed in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud and of fire; quails, manna; perpetual wear of their garments; were some of the mercies they received. We are the spiritual Israel of God. 2) Elijah was fed by the ravens. (*1 Kings* xvii. 4-6.) 3) Daniel was preserved in the lion's den. (*Dan.* vi. 23.) 4) Hagar and Ishmael were delivered in the wilderness. (*Gen.* xxi. 19.) 5) Samson was provided for in his thirst. (*Judges* xv. 19.)

III. *The various offices of God's providential care.*—1) It is a mother, who carries us where and how God ordains to be best for us. 2) It is a nurse, who tends us, supplying our several wants, supporting us in our weak state. 3) It is a schoolmaster, ever teaching, pointing out to us the right road in which we ought to walk. 4) It is a friend and counsellor in all doubts and difficulties. 5) It is our guardian and protector in all dangers.

Epilogue.—Trust in, and cast yourselves entirely upon, God's Providence.

SERMON 565.

THE RICH MAN SAVED.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”—*Matt. vi. 24.*

Introduction.—Riches are like a beam placed across the shoulders, which prevent us from passing the narrow gate of the Kingdom of Heaven. We can incline the beam, and then we are able to pass in. Riches do not hinder salvation when they are—

I. *Not eagerly sought for.*—1) When the intention is not to become rich. (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Not the rich, ‘but they that will be rich.’ The lust and anxious cares are separate from riches themselves. When being rich, we feel we have enough. 2) When we seek spiritual before temporal riches. The ‘dew of heaven’ comes first in Jacob’s, but last in Esau’s blessing. (Gen. xxvii. 28-39.) 3) When they are righteously gained and preserved.

II. *Not immoderately delighted in.*—This is a sure test as to whether they are over-loved. (Job xxxi. 25-40.) Job knew how soon riches fail; and so did David. (Ps. lxii. 10.) If the tide of riches flow, exult not, for the ebb may soon follow.

III. *Not trusted in.*—(Job xxxi. 24-40.)—Hence the Lord (Luke xviii. 24); (1 Tim. vi. 17). Neither boasting of or in riches. You set them down at their true value. They are at best as a staff of reed upon which to lean.

IV. *Not mourned over when lost.*—(Job i. 21.)—S. Bernard rejoiced when he was robbed of two hundred pounds of silver.

V. *Liberally and rightly dispensed.*—Making mammon serve you, and not bringing yourself under subjection to mammon. Riches are servants (Matt. viii. 8) like the centurion’s servant. Zacchæus so used his wealth, and found grace. (Luke xix. 8.) Used moderately (Prov. xxv. 16), riches are as honey. Dives vomited them. (Luke xvi. 23.)

Epilogue.—So used, riches will not hurt, and possessing them the narrow door of kingdom of heaven can be entered.

SERMON 566.

THE DIGNITY OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Is not your life more than meat?”—*Matt.* vi. 25.

Introduction.—Undue solicitude for temporal blessings—1) chokes the soul with the thorns of this world’s cares (*Matt.* xiii. 22); 2) deadens the understanding; 3) separates the soul from God. Earnest solicitude for spiritual things—1) consoles the soul under the trials of life; 2) enlightens the understanding. (*Ps.* xxxiv. 5.) 3) draws the soul nigh to God. (*1 Cor.* vi. 17.) The soul, and the things of the soul, are superior in dignity to things temporal, for four reasons.

I. *By creation.*—On the sixth day (*Gen.* i. 27) man was created, and the image of God was stamped upon his soul. Body is of earth, whilst the sinless soul is the image of Christ. God is one in essence, and three in persons; the soul is one in essence and three in powers: in memory it represents the Father; in will, of faith in the Son; in intellect, which embraces eternal life through God the Holy Ghost.

II. *By vocation.*—The calling of the soul is to praise the Creator with angels and archangels, and to render perpetual thanksgivings. Man has a middle state; creation serves him, and yet he has to serve God. Man rules by his understanding; he serves by his holiness, and by the discipline of his will. (*1 Thess.* iv. 7.) The vocation of the soul is to receive, and to render, and to flee; conscience condemning the unthankful and the ungrateful.

III. *By redemption.*—(*1 Cor.* vi. 20; *1 Pet.* i. 18.)—The world could not furnish anything valuable enough to redeem the soul. ‘O soul, redeemed at so heavy a cost, dost thou allow my body to be condemned?’ Hagar is the body, and Sarai is the soul. (*Gen.* xvi. 4-10.) When the body humbles itself, then it returns to the subjection of the soul.

IV. *By final destiny.*—The soul is destined for a state of glory, in which it will enjoy—1) brightness without darkness; 2) beauty without deformity; 3) agility without weight; 4) impassibility without punishment; 5) subtlety without grossness; 6) health without languor; 7) rest without labour; 8) security without fear; 9) knowledge without error; 10) peace without disturbance; 11) life without death; 12) joy without sorrow. (*Isa.* li. 11.)

Epilogue.—Honour and cherish the soul.

SERMON 567.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel,* Ser. X.)

“No man can serve two masters . . . the evil thereof.”—*Matt. vi. 24-34.*

Introduction.—Holy Scripture is like Paradise, being watered by four streams or senses—the literal, the allegorical, the tropological, and the anagogical; which meanings irrigate, instruct, and fecundate it. The Bible contains many trees, such as those of good and evil. The lives of bad men to be avoided; those of others to be sought after, the histories of the good. So here mammon and undue solicitude are to be avoided, and the kingdom and righteousness of God are to be earnestly desired.

I. *Mammon, or unjust gain, is to be avoided.*—1) It loses more than it gains. God cannot exist with the mammon of iniquity, any more than Dagon could abide with the ark. (1 Sam. v. 3, 4.) When Dagon, or mammon, is set up in the soul, the ark, or grace, is expelled therefrom. 2) Such gain grievous hurts. Loss is to be preferred to base gain, for that carries one grief, but the latter perpetual grief. It brought leprosy to Gehazi. (2 Kings v. 26, 27; Hab. ii. 9.)

II. *Excessive solicitude is to be dismissed.*—1) It seeks temporal goods as an ultimate end, and destroys faith. (Matt. xiv. 30.) Covetousness is a serving of idols. (Eph. v. 5.) ‘After all these things.’ 2) It leads us to regard unduly the superfluities of life, and to crave after them. (Luke xii. 16-22.) 3) It destroys our faith in the goodness and help of God; it is like wearing too small a ring. 4) It sets us longing for the morrow; for some distant day or advantage. 5) It leads us to put the present before the future. 6) It causes us to trust too much to our own power and energy.

III. *The kingdom of God is to be first sought after.*—1) By seeking before all things for heavenly blessings. 2) By placing the soul’s salvation as the end of all our seeking; the Rachel of all our toil. 3) By the sacrifice of temporal rather than of spiritual things. 4) By making the inward life our highest concern. 5) By keeping the soul from immersion in worldly things. 6) By serving the soul before the body. (Luke xvii. 7-10.) The body is the servant.

IV. *The righteousness of God is to be sought for.*—1) The grace of God in the soul, our wife, our Ruth. 2) All good works, and the keeping of His commandments.

SERMON 568.

THE SOIL OF CHARITY.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Ye, being rooted and grounded in love.”—*Eph.* iii. 17.

Introduction.—The soul is here compared to a tree, which can be planted in many different soils, and can be nourished by many different desires. The soil of love or charity is the best of all. For the place of love is—

I. *A place of security.*—Secure as being a place of God’s Presence. (1 John iv. 16.) Safe, being in God’s hands. (John x. 29.) Whatsoever we suffer, whilst we are rooted in love, is for good and not for harm. We rest securely even upon earthly love, how much more ought we to rest upon the love of Jesus Christ. (John xv. 13, 14.)

II. *A place of happiness.*—Resting upon the love of God, we feel that come what will (Ps. xxiii. 4). A sense of insecurity mars all the happiness of earth; when the affections are securely placed, there is happiness indeed.

III. *A place of riches.*—If love is a place of God it must be a place of riches, since He is the source of all riches. Having gold, we are rich in our treasury; having God, we are rich in conscience. When we join our gold and God, our conscience and our treasury, then are we rich indeed. Love knows no poverty.

IV. *A place of innocence.*—(*Eph.* iv. 15.)—There is no growth, but a wasting away without love. (1 Cor xiii. 2.) With love towards us we become not poor but largely rich, enlarging our own souls as we extend our sympathies. When we love God we reach towards Him; if haply we can prepare ourselves to receive Him. Love increases us by the knowledge of Himself, who is Love.

V. *A place of immortality.*—Where true love is, nothing dies: love is stronger than death. (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

Epilogue.—If the place of our love and affection be worthily fixed, as upon Jesus Christ, we have all these good things for our abiding portion.

SERMON 569.

THE HABITATION OF THE LORD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”—*Eph.* iii. 17.

Introduction.—There are three grades and kinds of dwelling :—1) ‘Where dwellest thou?’ (John i. 38.) The inhabitation of grace, leading and teaching men by the spirit. 2) ‘Where Thou feedest.’ (Cant. i. 7.) The reflection and refreshment of true wisdom. 3) ‘Where Thou makest Thy flock to rest.’ (Cant. i. 7.) The quiet of divine friendship and indwelling. Happy they who dwell with Jesus Christ in the house of grace ; happier they who feast with Him at the table of wisdom ; happiest of all and most beloved, they who rest with Him on the couch of contemplation. In order that Jesus Christ may dwell in the house of the soul—

I. *It must be pure.*—Jesus Christ cleanses it by His Blood before He can dwell in it, using as means baptism and repentance. He was conceived at Nazareth, which signifies sanctified, or ‘blossoming,’ with the pureness and innocence of the opening flower. Note the intense love of Jesus Christ for sinners, and His intense hatred of sin.

II. *It must be weaned from earthly affections.*—Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem in poverty, in the ‘house of bread,’ which signifies spiritual bread. His birth a type of what our lives ought to be, if we will dwell with Him. (Col. iii. 2.)

III. *It must be warmed with the fervour of obedience.*—At Bethany ‘house of obedience’ He was with Simon at supper, and many were converted ; Martha served. Lazarus was raised from the dead. (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42.) Obedience knits the soul to God, and leads it onwards in the path of holiness.

Epilogue.—The bodily dwelling with Jesus Christ is impossible now ; the present spiritual dwelling with Him, prepares us for a bodily, spiritual, and eternal dwelling with Him in glory.

SERMON 570.

THREE USES OF TRIBULATIONS.—(*Epistle*,
Ser. III.)

“I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you.”—*Eph.* iii. 13.

Introduction.—As the mean partakes of the nature of the extremes, so does our life, which is a mean between heaven and hell, partake of the joy of the one and of the pain of the other. Of the two (*Isa.* xxxv. 1, 2; *Lam.* v. 15, 16.) ‘Bitterness’ is an ingredient in all joys. Tribulations are not an unmixed evil, but they have three uses.

I. *They preserve the soul from future sin.*—(*Ps.* cxix. 143.)—They often convey God’s very presence, as in (*Exod.* xx. 20.) How many men are restrained from sin by want of means and of opportunities. How many of us are preserved from guilt by means of those very tribulations which we now so bitterly deplore. It is a tradition that Martha was the pure though afflicted virgin of (*Matt.* ix. 20), who by this very infirmity was kept from that sin into which her beautiful sister Mary had so sadly fallen.

II. *They purify the soul from past sins.*—The judgment upon Adam and Eve separated them from their former guilt. (*Gen.* iii. 24.) They deprive us of the occasions and of the desire of sinning. By affliction we enter upon a new phase of life. ‘What the furnace is to gold and silver; the fire to iron; the flail to the ear; that is tribulation to a righteous man.’ Tribulations awaken in the conscience a humbling sense of shame and remorse.

III. *They increase our capacities for grace.*—As the copper vessel increases when it is beaten out by the mallet, so does the soul increase when it is beaten out by tribulation. The soul, like that of Job, gets to hold larger measures of grace. Job’s soul was being beaten out and made truly larger and larger by affliction every day. Afflictions enlarge our sympathies with fellow sufferers. and in every way increase our capacities for feeling. (*Rom.* v. 3.) ‘Glory in them,’ knowing what they are doing. (*2 Cor.* iv. 17.) They are as a kind lord who, having two debtors in prison, and should throw at each, one night, a bag of gold, hurting the head of one, and the arm of another; in the morning they both pay their debts and forget the pain.

Epilogue.—Under suffering, never fail and sink; nor murmur under any trouble.

SERMON 571.

THE FOUR DEATHS.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. I.*)

“There was a dead man carried out.”—*Luke vii. 12.*

Introduction.—As justice appears in the punishment of sin, so does mercy shine in its forgiveness: and mercy is more blessed and valuable to man than justice, on account of his weakness. We pray, ‘O Lord, remember mercy in Thine anger; although Thy justice and Thy mercy are equal, yet put Thy mercy before Thy justice.’ God does and says (Ezek. xviii. 23.) Mercy led to the Incarnation of the Lord (Titus iii. 5), and by His crucifixion and death He has purchased life for us. No wonder then, that the Lord had compassion on this poor dead man. We note four forms of death.

I. *The death of nature.*—All natural creatures, who live a natural life, die a natural death. (Ecclus. xli. 1.) Natural death flowed from Adam’s disobedience. (Gen. ii. 17; iii. 17.) As a dead root makes dead branches, the fount being corrupt, its waters are so too. This natural death is—1) General: no one exempt (Hor. Od. lib. 1, iv. 13; Luke xii. 20); 2) terrible: from the presence of our ghostly enemies; 3) formidable: on account of its dissolution; 4) dreadful for its inquisition into our works.

II. *The death of deadly sin.*—It kills the soul whilst the body is still living. (Rev. iii. 1.) ‘Art dead.’ As heavy in the soul as the dead are in the body. Four instruments of death to the body, so is the soul slain—1) By the sword of envy: Abel. 2) By the fire of avarice: it killed Balaam. (Num. xxii. 23.) 3) By the arrow or dart of sensuality. (Rev. vii. 23.) 4) By the water of pride. (Hosea x. 7.)

III. *The death of grace.*—By this death a man dies to this world and lives to Jesus Christ. (Col. iii. 3.) It implies—1) The disease of sorrow and repentance, and languishment for God’s love (Cant. ii. 3); 2) a new taste for Divine things; 3) the new paleness of charity (1 Cor. xiii. 7); 4) fresh appetite for spiritual food; 5) a heart broken by Divine love; 6) a soul separated from worldly desires.

IV. *The death eternal.*—(Rev. xvi. 10, 11; xiv. 19.)—A reaping of an unripe harvest. Death like Ishmael. (Jer. xli. 8.) Goeth forth to slay; but saveth those who have treasures in barley, wheat, and oil.

Epilogue.—Seek the two former and shun the other deaths.

SERMON 572.

THE MOURNERS.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. II.*)“Weep not.”—*Luke vii. 13.*

Introduction.—It is the opinion of many and great theologians that man was created mortal as to his body, but preserved from mortality by a special gift of grace, which gift he lost by the Fall. It might have been by eating of the tree of life of which he was henceforth not allowed to partake. (Gen. iii. 22-24.) This death has ever caused lamentation, and ‘Jesus Christ,’ the true ‘tree of life,’ raises the body to life. There are three especial mourners in the world—

I. *The bereaved.*—The widow mourns over her lost son. The two chief objects of human love are—1) A husband (Gen. ii. 24); 2) a son. Parents love their children with a fonder love than they receive from them. (Eth. viii. c. 12.) Widowed and deprived of the consolation of her husband, she turns to her son and is comforted and sustained by his strength. Friendship of soul is strangely dependent upon association through the body, by which it sees, hears, and holds its converse.

II. *The Church militant.*—She mourns over the loss of a soul, one regenerated by Divine grace, and made capable of the vision of the heavenly spouse; over the delay which is effected in the coming of the Lord’s Kingdom.

III. *The conscience.*—Mourns with regret and remorse—1) Over grace lost; 2) over opportunities neglected; 3) over the expected punishment. This is the highest form of mourning, as it springs from the sense of a self-bereavement.

Epilogue.—Our Blessed Lord is the true Elijah. (2 Kings iv. 27-37.) The Shunamite is the soul who receives Jesus Christ, the real Elijah, in the Sacrament of the Altar, in the devotion of spiritual exercises, in fervent desires and meditation. The soul of man is the son, who assailed by evil thoughts dies. Jesus Christ comes and lays the rod of fear upon it, which cannot rouse it; He comes again, warms it by His love, and kisses it; breathing into it His breath and it revives. Jesus Christ, as our Spiritual Physician, longs to heal our dying souls.

SERMON 573.

QUICKENING GRACE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“He came and touched the bier; . . . and he that was dead sat up.”—
Luke vii. 14, 15.

Introduction.—The touch and the voice of Jesus Christ conveyed that quickening grace by the power of which the dead son was raised to life: another touch and another voice, and the dead soul is quickened and restored to its spiritual life. No soul can repent and be converted without the special help and quickening grace of God. This need of the quickening touch and grace is expressed in the following passages of Holy Scripture: (John vi. 44, 45; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Jer. x. 23.) The voice of the Lord urges us to a spiritual birth. (Ps. xxix. 9.) This quickening grace takes four forms.

I. Preventing or exciting grace.—(Rev. iii. 20; Eph. v. 14.)—By which God touches the soul which is sleeping in sin, by—1) Inspirations; 2) inward illumination; 3) callings; 4) knockings. (Rev. iii. 20.) This grace speaks to the heart of the sinner, pointing out His many and grievous sins, and bidding him rise and seek the Lord by contrition.

II. Helping grace.—The soul is aroused, but it is still weak, failing, unstable, and ignorant; it knows not what to do. Hence it is God Who (Phil. ii. 13). Hence S. Paul was bidden arise and go into the city. (Acts ix. 6.)

III. Sufficient grace.—By which, if a man be willing to be converted, he can bring forth good fruit; and if he wills it not, is of no avail. Not because sufficient grace fails, but because by his free will man has cast sufficient grace out of his soul. (Heb. xii. 15.)

IV. Efficacious grace.—Is the voice of God speaking to the heart, so that it efficaciously and infallibly persuades; it moves the will itself like the appearance of Jesus Christ to S. Paul. (Acts ix. 5.) It flows from the divine, and not from the human, will.

Epilogue.—Let this grace come to you as to the woman of Samaria, so that you may be able to say (Ps. xxiii. 2, 3.)

SERMON 574.

THE RAISED ONES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“Young man, I say unto thee, *Arise*.”—*Luke vii. 14.*

Introduction.—Only three special instances are recorded of our Blessed Lord raising the dead, although He had the power to have raised as many as seemed good to Him; and each of these three persons were restored to life under different circumstances of death, and they each represent a different relationship to sin.

I. *Sin in the heart*.—(Mark v. 38-43.)—Jairus' daughter: she was still in the house. It represents sin in the heart. A secret sinner, who as yet has offended God only. The Lord speaks, and ‘the consent unto sin is condemned, and breath is regained unto saving health and righteousness.’ (Aug.) This resurrection takes place—1) Silently; 2) secretly; 3) gradually within the retirement of the conscience, within the walls of the house. The matter rests between God and the sinful soul. It is comparatively easy to be raised when only just dead.

II. *Sin in the act*.—(Luke vii. 12.)—‘Dead man carried out.’ Sin in the act. Man as well as God offended. Manifest and open sin. They who have been longer dead are more difficult to restore. The consequence of sin remaining whilst the sinner is restored. The works of sin follow the pardoned sinner.

III. *The habit of sin*.—(John xi. 39.)—Sinner is buried, pressed down under the burden of the habit of sin to the very ground. Corrupted of sin, ‘he stinketh:’ ‘four days dead.’ The day of—1) Suggestion; 2) consent; 3) act; 4) habit. Not merely did the Lord weep (John xi. 35), but he groaned (John xi. 38), and Mary and Martha and the Jews wept with him. After this most difficult restoration to life, Lazarus was still ‘bound.’

Epilogue.—Pray we for this quickening spirit; and that in ourselves may be fulfilled (Eph. ii. 1.)

SERMON 575.

THE MEMORY OF DEATH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)“Behold, there was a dead man.”—*Luke vii. 12.*

Introduction.—I will furnish you to-day with a receipt by which all men may not only live a long time, but also live well. What will not men do to prolong life? Yet it happens that they live short and miserable lives. Our Physician gives the receipt: ‘Behold, a dead man.’ The memory of death is the auspice of joy and of a long life. There was once written in golden letters over a market-place, ‘Be happy, and mindful of death.’ Trace the memory of death.

I. *In Paradise.*—The threat. (Gen. ii. 17.) Had they been mindful of death, they would never have eaten. (Gen. iii. 4).

II. *‘Coats of skins.’*—Were signs of mortality (Gen. iii. 21); tokens to remember death, if they would sin no more. Oh! the ineffable mercy of God, the punishment of sin passed into arms of grace and holiness.

III. *The mark of Cain.*—(Gen. iv. 15.)—A tradition that Cain was marked by letter *Tau*, the last letter of Hebrew alphabet, a memorial of death. (Ezek. ix. 5.) The mark is *Tau*, and it saves life.

IV. *The promise to Simeon.*—(Luke ii. 26.)—The righteous see death before it sees them; not so with the wicked. (Luke xii. 20.)

V. *The fourth Commandment.*—(Exod. xx. 12; Eph. vi. 2.)—The first with promise. Who are my father and mother? Answer. (Job xvii. 14.) ‘Corruption’ and the ‘worm’ both symbolize death.

VI. *Effect upon Pilate and the Centurion.*—(Mark xv. 39, 44.)—All His Passion did not affect them like His death.

VII. *It humbled Saul.*—(1 Sam. x. 2, 21, 22.)—Meditation at Rachel’s sepulchre had so humbled him.

VIII. *It preserved David from murder.*—(1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 11.)—Thought of death kept him from inflicting it.

Epilogue.—Jesus Christ born not for living but for dying men to consecrate death.

SERMON 576.

SIN IS DEATH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)"A dead man."—*Luke vii. 12.*

Introduction.—Death is a visible representation of sin, which is a more real death than is that of the body. 'True death is when men do not fear the separation of the soul from God.' (Aug.)

I. *Death separates the soul from the body.*—Sin separates the soul from God. (Isa. lix. 2; Hosea vii. 13.) In proportion as God excels the soul, so is its separation from Him worse than the death of the body. 1) In consequence. 2) In duration. 3) In punishment.

II. *Death deadens the body.*—Sin deadens the soul. (Prov. xxiii. 35.) We soon feel the loss of our bodily senses. Yet we discern not when many of the highest faculties of the soul are numbed. (Luke x. 30.) Sin—1) Blunts the feelings. 2) Destroys the affections. 3) Darkens the mind.

III. *Death corrupts the body.*—Sin corrupts the soul. (Ps. xiv. 1. So every one form of sin is (Prov. xiv. 30). In judgment of the wicked it is recorded. (Isa. lxvi. 24.) Sin deprives the soul of all healthy action and energy.

IV. *Death deprives the body of motion.*—Sin fixes the soul by the habit of sin. When the heart is fixed, either by love or habit, upon the world, or the flesh, it remains stationary and cannot be changed to the love of higher and better things. The heart becomes like that of the Canaanites. (Exod. xv. 16.)

Epilogue.—Holiness is life. 1) It is a state of life. 2) It procures an entrance into a world of life. 3) It overcomes death, since it unites us with Him Who is 'The Life.'

SERMON 577.

TEMPORAL CARES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)“Weep not.”—*Luke vii. 13.*

Introduction.—Why was the widow forbidden to weep, when deprived of her only son and earthly consolation? Did the most merciful Redeemer desire to stay all natural affection? What mother ought not to weep when so bereft? The words might be spoken by way of consolation: ‘Weep not,’ he will soon be restored to you again (*Ven. Bede*); or of reproach. (*Aug.*) You weep for a cause which is not worthy of sorrow; you bewail the death of the body, but the death of the soul, which is caused by sin, troubles you not; and yet the death of the soul is far more to be bewailed than that of the body. How often, if He were with us now, would Jesus Christ have to reprove this grief over merely temporal losses. This undue care for the body and neglect of the soul. Temporal care—

I. *Places a sword in the hands of the Judge.*—*S. Basil* says that Goliath was really David’s armour-bearer. (1 Sam. xvii. 50, 51.) He carried the weapon which smote off his own head. So will our care for the body and this world, and our neglect of the soul, furnish Jesus Christ with a sword with which to slay us at the last day.

II. *Is to be noted in the following particulars.*—1) Thought and prompt measures. If our domestics are ill, our cattle diseased, even our walls out of repair, we take action immediately; yet the soul may be ever so ill, and we continue wholly unconcerned about it. 2) Care: for every part and member of the body. To heal the eye, for instance, if it be weak, keeping it from the light. We guard our eyes from a little dust, protecting them most carefully, whilst we recklessly expose the soul to the dust and storms of temptation, without using any means of mitigating the evil effects. 3) Suffering: when the body requires healing, we drink bitter medicines, and we endure the most dreadful operations; we are willing to suffer nothing on behalf of the soul when sick.

Epilogue.—Weep not for the body, weep for the soul; take all thought for it.

SERMON 578.

WHY DEATH IS LEFT IN THE WORLD).—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“He came and touched the bier.”—*Luke* vii. 14.

Introduction.—(*Joshua* iii. 14 to end; iv. 18.)—Jordan is the river of death; the ‘ark’ is Jesus Christ, Who ‘touched the bier,’ stayed the waters of death, and restored the dead to life. Why did Jesus leave death in the world, when He had the power to abolish it? Jesus Christ left death in the world, to teach us—

I. *To hate sin*.—For sin (*Rom.* v. 12); to teach us that sin is ‘the firstborn of death.’ (*Job* xviii. 13.) Looking upon death in loathsomeness and corruption, we see the work of sin. By the destruction of Sodom (*Gen.* xix. 24), God left a perpetual record of the punishment which is due to sin. Without death, we should lose our sense of horror in regard to sin.

II. *To scorn the vanities of the world*.—The vanities of the world and the pleasures of the flesh are convicted, when we see how very soon beauty fades; how rapidly they all pass away. Happy death illumines savingly the blind eyes of the lover’s beauty and vanity. Pleasure and sensuality would be unbridled, if they were not checked by death.

III. *That there is a limit to power and riches*.—Without death both would increase in unworthy hands, till the moral laws of man’s social relationship would be all subverted. The rich would grow rich without limit; the powerful would never be hindered in their lust for dominion. The work of man, too, for good or evil, would never be ended. Death is the stone which breaks the image. (*Dan.* ii. 34.)

IV. *Consolation to the poor and miserable*.—(*Isa.* lvii. 1, 2.)—The punishment of sin is the remedy for all the evils of sin; death is both a reward and a rest. (*Job* vii. 2; xiv. 13.) The poor, like the Israelites, spoil the rich Egyptians at their death. (*Exod.* xii. 36.)

V. *The need of Christian warfare*.—By death the crown of martyrdom becomes the crown of life. It is then by means of death that we can earn our reward, through our struggle and fight as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Epilogue.—Death tends to God’s glory; and it can become, too, our great gain.

SERMON 579.

SORROW FOR THE LOST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)“Weep not.”—*Luke vii. 13.*

Introduction.—It is natural to sorrow for those who are taken from us; it would be unnatural if we showed no sign of grief. Yet still. (1 Thess. iv. 13.) We may sorrow, but not with the outward demonstrations of woe such as the Orientals use, or the Jews, to produce an effect; or even in excess. When the heart is really stricken to overflowing, we should do as Jesus Christ did (John xi. 33-38), resisting as far as possible undue emotion. We should consider—

I. *That death is ordained by God.*—God wills that man should die. Therefore man ought to submit to God’s pleasure. In death God seeks to recover His own. The son of the widow came from God, Who received him back again when he died. ‘Weep not;’ but rather say with Job. (Job i. 21.)

II. *That death is a common necessity.*—Not even our Blessed Lord was exempt from death. On this account the woman of Tekoah pleaded Absalom’s forgiveness. (2 Sam. xiv. 14.) ‘If we have never to die, well: but if we must die some time, why should we not die now?’ (Aug.)

III. *That death is often a happy release.*—Death often relieves our dear ones from miseries and sorrows, or from further sin; and these very dear ones themselves may sometimes be the causes of our own weakness, or of our sin. Such are removed from the evils to come for their good; from ourselves for our advantage.

IV. *That overmuch sorrow is useless.*—It does harm, but it never can do good. David acted rightly when the child was smitten. (2 Sam. xii. 22, 23.) Some things are amended by sorrow; death is not one of these; for there is no change in the decree of death.

V. *That death is sleep to the Christian.*—(Matt. ix. 24; John xi. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 15.)—If we are content without our friends whilst they are sleeping, we should not be greatly disturbed if we have to endure their absence until the resurrection.

Epilogue.—‘Weep not,’ even at any time with a despairing sorrow.

SERMON 580.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“It came to pass the day after . . . all the region round about.”—
Luke vii. 11-18.

Introduction.—(Prov. viii. 1, 8.)—Solomon in these words seems to have prophetically foreseen this Gospel, in which our Blessed Lord, the Wisdom of God, preaches in the street or the gate of the city of Nain, and meets with and raises to life the dead ‘young man.’ From this Gospel we learn that—

I. *The young die equally with the old.*—We know this without the Gospel revelation, but yet the young always think their full course of life is to be run undisturbed. God sometimes cuts its short for several causes. 1) When they will grow up harmful to others; bad sons, bad citizens. (Ps. lviii. 9.) 2) When they are disobedient, like the sons of Eli and like Absalom. 3) When they presume upon their youth, and count upon old age, as Amon (2 Kings xxi. 19-24); who might doubtless have thought, ‘my father committed all sin as a boy, and he repented in his old age.’

II. *Children sometimes die before their parents.*—As the Egyptian first-born. The first who died is Haran (Gen. xi. 28), who was taken away from Terah because of his idolatry. When the children depart from the graces of the parents, they are often cut off, whilst the parents are left.

III. *Youth tends to death unless restrained.*—(Jer. viii. 6.)—God comes and stays that course with the hand of death. (Job xix. 21.) Of Pharaoh (Exod. xi. 1.) A milder form of touch caused the prodigal son to return to his father. (Luke xv. 16.)

IV. *The world casts out the dead.*—Those whom living, the world loved, honoured, and flattered, it casts out, buries, and forgets when dead. This reward the world gives to its followers.

V. *The dead are not to be immoderately mourned for.*—There is the hope for them of a glorious resurrection. Eli grieved more for the loss of the Ark than he did for his sons. Moderate grief is natural; immoderate is wicked.

VI. *Death is to be prepared for, but not feared.*—Learn to prepare for, but not to fear, death; rather be ever ready to meet it when it may come.

SERMON 581.

THE WORTHY WALK.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.”—*Eph. iv. 1.*

Introduction.—The worthiness here insisted upon may refer—
1) To consistency of Christian conduct. (*Phil. i. 27.*) 2) To a like earnest desire for salvation, as that which our Blessed Lord showed upon the Cross. (*Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.*) We must be harder than the rocks if we are not moved by his voice.
3) To the dignity of our calling. This dignity is above any earthly sovereignty; it belongs to the kingdom of glory. The dignity of our Christian calling implies that we ought to walk—

I. *In a due state or condition.*—1) Free; not burdened, as a yoked beast, with the cares and riches of the world: much less with the hands defiled by the filth of sin. 2) Not naked, but clothed with a suitable apparel. (*Col. iii. 12; Ps. xlv. 13, 14.*) The soul is the ‘king’s daughter.’ This clothing is an armour of holiness (*Rom. xiii. 12*); it is a robe of glory. (*Isa. lii. 1.*) Robe of sin and Satan keeps us out of the heavenly city. 3) Not disgraced by any sin which rises up in condemnation against us, and causes us to forfeit our calling.

II. *With a lowly estimate of worldly things.*—With a certain contempt for the world. Feeling (*Ps. lxxiii. 25*). Our heavenly father is a King, whilst our earthly mother is a peasant. We ought to claim the estate of the former, and to despise the latter in comparison with the former.

III. *As seeking to labour earnestly.*—The greatness of the reward of our calling, calls for great exertion on our part. If the toil frighten thee, consider the reward. (*Gen. xv. 1.*)

IV. *Perseveringly.*—The heavenly kingdom is only gained by our walking quite to, not merely towards it. The eternal crown is given only to those who persevere. (*Gal. vi. 9.*)

V. *Joyfully.*—God desires the dignity of our calling to bear us up, and to give us joy. We walk not as criminals going to execution, but ‘as fellow citizens of the saints.’ (*Ps. cv. 3; cxxxviii. 5.*)

Epilogue.—Never let your Christian dignity be lost sight of, and a sense of holy pride will hold you up.

SERMON 582.

THE FOUNT OF BAPTISM.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“One Baptism.”—*Eph.* iv. 5.

Introduction.—The ‘one Lord and one faith is well joined to’ one baptism. Of which (*Zech.* xiii. 1) Jesus Christ was a fount of wisdom and grace at His Incarnation. He is the river (*Gen.* ii. 10) with its four heads. 1) His birth, the water for which David prayed. (*2 Sam.* xxiii. 15.) 2) His full age, that of (*S. John* vii. 37, 38). 3) His Passion opened founts of pardon from His wounds. 4) His Resurrection is a stream of glory. (*Isa.* lviii. 11.) So also in His Ascension and His Sacraments; especially in Holy Baptism, which is—

I. *A fountain of being and of life.*—One existence, one baptism. Eve, from the sleeping side of Adam; so the Church from the opened side of Jesus Christ. Being springs from marriage; and matrimony was contracted at the fountains, between Rebekah and Isaac (*Gen.* xxiv. 15); and between Rachel and Jacob (*Gen.* xxix. 10); lastly between Moses and Zipporah. (*Exod.* ii. 16.) All of which examples are so many allegories of baptismal grace.

II. *A fountain of birth.*—(*SS.* Chrys. and Leo.)—Baptism is into the womb of our mother, the Church, in whom our second birth is conceived and consummated, and in whom we receive that which is spiritual and divine. In the womb of the sacred font, the mystical members of Jesus Christ are daily found. (*Gal.* iv. 19.)

III. *A fountain of death.*—The sepulchre of the Old Adam, wherein the old man and his deeds are buried. (*Rom.* vi. 3, 4.) ‘A death unto sin and a new life in righteousness.’ A death of that dying life which is truly life.

IV. *A fountain of healing.*—The pool Bethesda (*John* v. 2-5)—1) In which all the diseased need to be bathed. 2) Five porches: the five wounds of Christ. 3) Three classes of sufferers. The universality of the healing: blind, halt, withered; the ‘halt,’ serving God and mammon; the ‘withered,’ lacking love and grace; the ‘blind,’ those ignorant of the faith.

Epilogue.—The molten sea of (*1 Kings* vii. 23), is a type of the Baptismal laver, placed at the entrance to the Church; the ‘twelve oxen’ represent the Twelve Apostles; at all quarters universal grace.

Epilogue.—1) Remember these things, thinking over your own Baptism; 2) especially when bringing others to the font. (*Isa.* xli. 18.)

SERMON 583.

VAIN EXCUSES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“They could not answer Him again to these things.”—*Luke* xiv. 6.

Introduction.—It is rightly done, O scornful Pharisees ; there is nothing due to thee save confusion and silence. Whosoever dares to dispute with the Eternal Wisdom, suffers a like shame and defeat. Jesus Christ utters a few words, and, behold, they did not answer Him ! These words apply to thee, O sinner, as well as to the Pharisees. Say, didst thou never dare to dispute with God ? What is more common than to rail at God’s precepts, and to offer excuses for sin ? The homicide pleads the tyranny of anger ; the thief, need, etc. ‘We contend with God when we defend what He hates ; when we are pleased with what displeases Him.’ (Bern.) Come, O sinner. (Isa. xliii. 26.) The sinner pleads—

I. *The force of indwelling sin.*—He acknowledges his weakness, frailty, etc., and asks, Could not Jesus Christ have, by baptism, cleansed me wholly from indwelling sin ? God left such sin, that with a grateful mind we may ever remember the benefit of redemption, and may implore the Divine help, with a fervour and humility in proportion to the assaults of sin. The sight of the brazen serpent healed the bitten ones (Num. xxi. 9), but the race of serpents is still left ; the true Brazen Serpent (John iii. 14) healed many ; yet sin is left. 1) To keep man humble, under a sense of natural infirmity and misery. 2) To prevent him from lapsing into carelessness. 3) To afford him the means of earning grace.

II. *The force of outward sin.*—Nets, pitfalls, temptations, are spread all around. I answer, that Satan can but invite and suggest ; he cannot force you to sin. God wills the conflict with sin should fashion you as stones wrought by the hammer, to be built into the heavenly temple by-and-by.

III. *Weak man is strengthened by the hand of God.*—The reed in Jesus Christ’s hands is a pen of condemnation, and a sign of power. No place for excuse, whilst grace is given to restrain the inordinate affections of our unruly nature. The Judge will say, ‘If you were able, why did you not resist the desires of sin ; if you were not able, why did you not seek My help ?’

Epilogue.—O, sinful soul, now you may offer an excuse, but then you will not be able to do so.

SERMON 584.

THE PHARISAIC SPIRIT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)"They watched Him."—*Luke xiv. 1.*

Introduction.—Never perhaps was the perfect wisdom of our Blessed Lord more clearly seen than in His treatment of the Pharisees, which is recorded in the Gospel for to-day. (Prov. i. 17.) For not only did He avoid falling into their snares, but He further involved them in their own toils. The Pharisees endeavoured to convict Him, and He brought them into contempt and discomfiture. He caused to be laid bare—

I. *Their hypocrisy.*—They invited Him to the house; they treated Him as a guest; not from loving and knowing Him, but from sinister and bad motives. The invitation looked kind; its purpose was devilish. Hence He said of them. (Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.) He was betrayed by those with whom He ate and drank; and He could say of His host. (Luke xxii. 21.) Every act of hypocrisy is a betrayal of Jesus Christ, and ends in a defeat.

II. *Their ignorance.*—They were full of sin themselves; which sin, neither knowing nor feeling, they sought to find sin in one Who is sinless. (1 Pet. ii. 22; Prov. xxiv. 15; Ps. xxxvii. 12.) It is the prerogative of a fool to behold another's sin, forgetful of one's own. (Matt. vii. 5.) Pray for the fulness of self-knowledge.

III. *Their cruelty.*—They had no compassion for the dropsical man; they took exception at his being cured. 'True righteousness implies compassion; whilst this false indignation' (Greg. Mag.; Matt. xxiii. 23) was an evidence of both a sinful and of a hardened state.

IV. *Their cowardice.*—They held their peace, when they were burning to speak out; neither before nor after the miracle did they dare to utter a word. They were present many against one, but they were all too craven even to spit out their venom. Cowardice is the legitimate offspring of hypocrisy, ignorance, and cruelty.

V. *Their pitifulness.*—They had a great care for that which was of no moment, and no care at all for that which was all important.

Epilogue.—If we would avoid a like condemnation, we must avoid a like spirit.

SERMON 585.

AMBITION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Sit not down in the highest room.”—*Luke* xiv. 8.

Introduction.—The ambition which is condemned in this Gospel consists of an immoderate desire for dignity or pre-eminence ; and it is, according to the sphere of its exercise, the source of present pain and mortification as well as of future punishment. It was the sin of Lucifer, who so suffered by it. (*Isa.* xiv. 12.)

I. *Scriptural illustrations.*—1) Moses was highly blest ; and he did so great a work because he was free from it. (*Exod.* iv. 10 ; iii. 11.) 2) Jotham’s parable. (*Judges* ix. 8-15.) The olive, fig, and the vine, good fruitful trees, would not give way to ambition. 3) Haman’s ambition ; how grievously defeated. (*Esther* vi. 6-12.) A wretched end. (*Ib.* vii. 10.) 4) Our Blessed Lord’s teaching against ambition. (*Matt.* xx. 25-29.) 5) Jesus Christ strongly condemned the ambition of the Pharisees. (*Matt.* xxiii. 2-13.)

II. *Examples of humility.*—1) S. Gregory the Great, elevated to the Pontificate against his will, bitterly laments the loss of his quiet in his former humble estate. 2) Godfrey, although persuaded by S. Bernard and Pope Eugenius, refused the See of Tours. 3) S. Augustine fled from Hippo, and was consecrated Bishop amidst his tears. 4) S. Ambrose long refused the See of Milan.

III. *Examples of ambition.*—1) Cardinal Wolsey : ‘ Whilst too much I served my king, I lost the grace of God.’ 2) Marchioness d’Ancre. (“ Students’ France,” pp. 380-384.) 3) Alexander the Great.

Epilogue.—Be content with a low estate ; be ambitious of humility and goodness. (*Hor. Car. lib. ii. ode x.*)

SERMON 586.

THE PLACES OF MAN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“Give this man place.”—*Luke* xiv. 9.

Introduction.—Twice in our lives are these words used on our behalf. At our birth God says, ‘Give this man place,’ ye parents and others, in this world I have created. At our death to the angels, whether of light or darkness, are these words repeated: Give this man place to the regions of blessedness, or to those of woe. We note three places, in which man may find his habitation.

I. *The place of this world.*—A place of persecution, insecurity, discipline, and punishment. (*John* xviii. 36; xv. 19.) Hence (*Ezek.* xxi. 3, 9, 10, 14). The first sword was that of persecution—which was a literal one in the first age of the world—which slew Abel, and all the martyrs whose blood was the seed of the Church; whose blood is still crying for vengeance. (*Gen.* iv. 10; *Matt.* xxiii. 35; *Rev.* vi. 10). The second sword was that of discord and of envy. All were of one mind, and of one purse after the Ascension in the first age of the Church; but they soon began to wax cold, and envy and jealousy quickly found for themselves a place. (*Rev.* vi. 2, 3.) The third sword was that of eternal damnation. (*Ps.* vii. 12; *Deut.* xxxii. 41; *Rev.* xix. 15.) Jesus Christ cuts with this sword when He says (*Matt.* xxv. 41.)

II. *The place of hell.*—Hell contains the damned, where the wretchedness is threefold according to the prophet. (*Zech.* ii. 7.) Sion is a holy soul. Babylon represents eternal damnation. Sion is to come away from Babylon, which is a place of—1) cruelty; all mercy is forgotten there. (*Ps.* xxxi. 12.) 2) Of darkness. (*Job* x. 20-22.) 3) Of unextinguishable fire. (*Isa.* xxxiv. 9, 10; *Luke* xvi. 24.)

III. *The place of glory.*—(*Ps.* lxxxiv. 4.) A threefold blessedness hard to speak of. (*1 Cor.* ii. 9.) Feeling with Jeremiah (i. 6)—1) Glory from the beatific vision which illumines the whole heaven, without sun and moon or stars in which; as in a mirror, man sees all the past, the present, and the future. 2) Pleasure flowing from the loving society in which the angels and elect dwell as brethren. (*Ps.* cxxxiii. 1.) 3) Joy without grief. (*Rev.* xxi. 4; *Isa.* xxxv. 10.)

Epilogue.—May, at the last day, Jesus Christ say to His angels, ‘Give this man place.’

SERMON 587.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CURE.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. V.*)

“He took him and healed him.”—*Luke xiv. 4.*

Introduction.—All our Blessed Lord’s cures of the body were but types of His cures of souls, which He came into this world both to heal and to save. ‘The cure of the soul He puts far before the healing of the body. (Matt. xvi. 26.) The miracle of this day’s Gospel gives a threefold instruction belonging to the cure of the soul.

I. *The place in which the cure was wrought*—‘Before Him’ in the Pharisees’ house. The sinful soul desirous of being healed, ought to be—1) Within, recollecting and collected with itself (Isa. xlv. 8); holding self-communion to find out as far as possible all its weakness and all its sin. 2) Humbly presenting itself before God by the affections (Joel ii. 12); and noting the difficulty of the cure, as in this case of dropsy: which disease represents pride, avarice, and sensuality. (Ps. cxix. 155.)

II.—*The time of the cure.*—‘The Sabbath day,’ which signifies rest from sin. ‘If you wish to be a true penitent, cease from sin.’ (Bern.) ‘The Sabbath’ looks also higher than this, and it points out that all infirmities will be cured in the Sabbath of heavenly rest, which will be a state of—1) Refreshment; 2) rest; 3) perfection.

III. *The manner of the cure.*—‘He took Him.’ The Lord neither regarded Himself nor the offence to the Pharisees, but ‘He took’ and touched the poor man; teaching us thereby that when a great good is to be effected we must not mind giving offence to the foolish. The sinner is taken hold of by the Lord when the confidence of hope is given to him. (Ps. xxvi. 1.) Grace is infused when sin is healed. (Rom. iii. 24.) Hence a free departure from the slavery of Satan. (Luke vii. 50; Rom. vi. 18.) Oh! how desirable is this liberty; how base is the opposite slavery!

Epilogue.—May we be touched by the finger of this Great Physician, and so be purged of sin.

SERMON 508.

WATCHERS.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. VI.*)

“They watched Him.”—*Luke xiv. 1.*

Introduction.—Satan is a parody upon God; he has, like God, his paradise, his angels, his sheep, his prophets, and his creatures full of eyes (*Rev. iv. 6; Ezek. x. 12*); but these creatures, like these Pharisees, have eyes without only, and not within: eyes by which they see the outward actions of others, but not the secrets of their own souls. Such were these observers; ‘they watched,’ if possible, to convict the Lord of doing a prohibited action. By so doing they showed themselves to be (*Matt. xv. 14*). It is peculiar to folly to behold the shortcomings of others, and to forget one’s own. This idle watching, this vain curiosity, affected S. Peter even, and was reproved by our Lord. (*John xxi. 21, 22.*) When SS. Peter, James, and John were watching unduly, they were bidden ‘Take heed.’ (*Mark xiii. 3, 4, 5, 9.*) Abraham, Moses, and David asked ‘Who am I?’ (*2 Sam. vii. 18; Exod. iii. 11.*) Pharisees, both ancient and modern, ask ‘Who art thou?’ Of such watchers we note—

I. *The watchers of others are careless of themselves.*—1) Balaam watched to encompass Israel’s destruction, whilst he was altogether heedless of his own. 2) Solomon watched for all knowledge, but fell into vanity because he knew not his own heart. 3) David watched Bathsheba rather than his own conscience. 4) The Church watching and seeking for a faithful member, returns disappointed. (*Cant. iii. 2.*) 5) An evil generation watches for a sign, and, lo! a sign is before it, yet it sees it not. (*Matt. xii. 38-41.*) 6) Watchers see others’ defects, not their own. (*Matt. vii. 5.*)

II. *Similitudes of watchers.*—1) Birds of prey, looking for omens (*Matt. xxvii. 49*), as the vultures watched for the carcasses of the crucified. 2) Dogs (*Ps. xxii. 16*), who bite and tear, by their detractions; who care not for that which is sweet, but for what is corrupt. 3) Lions and spiders. (*Ps. x. 9.*)

III. *Watchers are condemned by the Lord.*—1) Not to enter into a borrower’s house. (*Deut. xxiv. 10.*) 2) (*Ps. l. 21.*) God will make Himself as a pure and unspotted mirror.

Epilogue.—Be most eager to watch thyself; to guard revery thought, word, and deed; and looking within, you will have small eyes for the faults of those without.

SERMON 580.

THE PHARISAIC MIND.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread.”—

Luke xiv. 1.

Introduction.—It is a peculiar characteristic of holy souls to sorrow for the misfortunes of others, even if they be enemies; to be so pierced with the arrow of love, as to be unable to conceive of or to inflict injury upon any. Such love all men in Jesus Christ; they long to help all men: hence both towards God and man they are lovely, for that which delights the Most High cannot be displeasing to man. The Pharisees exhibited a spirit the very opposite of this: full of envy and hatred; burning in jealousy against the loving gentleness of the Lord. As in this Gospel, they ever ‘watched Him,’ to condemn and to misrepresent Him. Their foolish hearts were by envy so hardened, that they were not taught anything by converse with Jesus Christ, Who, to convert humble minds, read men a lesson by—

I. *The irreproachable mirror of His life.*—A holy life is a sublime yet simple teacher. It reproves, not by words but by deeds; it sets an example, not by counsel merely but by practice. It exercises a good influence over every unhardened heart. It did not appeal to the Pharisees, for their hearts were seared by sin.

II. *The sweet lessons of His honey-flowing mouth.*—Teachings conveyed in language at once—1) Tender; 2) touching; 3) earnest; 4) simple.

III. *The venerable wonders of His miracles.*—Over—1) Nature; 2) man; 3) spirit world. Ever wrought for benefit, not for harm; signs of ‘the mighty power of God;’ aids to faith and instructors in righteousness.

IV. *Deep humility.*—Contemning all pride in its lowliness of—1) Life; 2) spirit; 3) toil.

V. *Unruffled meekness and liberal kindness.*—Which ought to disarm all opposition; soften all cruel and hard thoughts.

VI. *Foreknowing wisdom.*—Convicting the—1) Ignorance; 2) false reasoning; 3) limited views of men.

Epilogue.—The glaring defects to be avoided in the Pharisaic spirit are—1) Pride; 2) envy; 3) bigotry; 4) self-contempt.

SERMON 590.

SPIRITUAL FOOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding sit not down in the highest room.”—*Luke* xiv. 8.

Introduction.—The ‘wedding’ of this Gospel shadows forth the marriage supper of the Lamb of (Rev. xix. 7); those spiritual nuptials that God makes with the soul in the chamber of the conscience; the union of the soul with Jesus Christ by faith and love; which marriage produces—1) faith; 2) holiness; 3) indissoluble union. The expression ‘sit at meat’ refers to that mental feast which faith supplies. Three conditions are needful to enjoy this spiritual food.

I. *Purity.*—A bright purity of soul proceeding from pardoned sin is the first requisite for enjoying the food of grace; for sin—1) Defiles the taste; 2) destroys the appetite; 3) prevents assimilation; depriving all such food of enjoyment, desire, and nourishment. No heavenly manna was given to the Israelites until they had left the darkness and sinfulness of Egypt.

II. *Quietness.*—To pass over the Red Sea. The sea is ever in motion, and signifies those who are agitated by divers anxieties. (Isa. lvii. 20, 21.) God cannot dwell by grace in the hearts of such as these (1 Kings xix. 11-23); the pride of the wind; the earthquake of avarice; and the fire of anger, must alike yield to the humility of the ‘still small voice’ which calms the soul.

III. *Love.*—The soul must be eager for heavenly love; it must have cast away the food of Egypt ere it can be fed with spiritual food. As long as man delights in earthly things he cannot love those which are heavenly. ‘Divine consolation is delicate, and it is not given to those who admit other help.’ (Bern.)

Epilogue.—Prepare thy soul for the banquet of Divine Grace.

SERMON 591.

THE GROUNDS OF HUMILITY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Go and sit down in the lowest room.”—*Luke xiv. 10.*

Introduction.—S. Simeon Stylites wishing to serve God, was told in a dream to dig deeper, and if he wished to raise a spiritual building to spare no pains on the foundations. The deeper we lay the foundations of our humility the higher shall we be able to raise our spiritual structure. ‘Do you wish to become great, begin from the smallest and humblest origin.’ (Aug.) Let then the following thoughts be as it were our implements with which we may dig out the foundations for our spiritual house. To learn the lesson of humility aright, let us remember—

I. *Our natural vileness and weakness.*—1) Our lowly origin of dust. Like the Bohemian monarch, who had placed before him his coarse clothing, when he was crowned; let us remember our lowly origin, even as David did. (2 Sam. vii. 18.) Our creation was on the sixth day, with the beasts, fishes, and reptiles. 3) Our weakness: here to-day and gone from the world to-morrow. (Rom. xi. 20.) S. Basil gives as an example of high-mindedness the Pharisee. (Luke xviii. 11.)

II. *Our past sins.*—Their weight. The leprous hand of Moses was to be a reminder, either of what he was, or he might become. (Exod. iv. 6, 7.) If you would continue humble, think upon your past sins. S. Paul never forgot his sinful state. (1 Cor. xv. 9.)

III. *Our possessions are not our own.*—They are all loans from God. (1 Tim. vi. 20.) So (Isa. xxvi. 12; Cant. iv. 16) ‘His’ not ‘our’ pleasant fruits. Our learning not of ourselves. (1 Cor. iv. 4.)

IV. *Our inferiority to others.*—Even in those things in which we excel, there are others who quite surpass us: in holiness, in knowledge, in wealth, honour, skill, etc.

V. *Our infinite inferiority to God.*—We are nothing when compared to His Majesty, before which the angels cover their wings. (Isa. vi. 2.) Angels feel themselves to be more and more vile as they see more and more of God’s glory. So Abraham felt increasingly as he talked with God. (Gen. xviii. 27.)

Epilogue.—May these thoughts beget that humility which exalts in due time.

SERMON 592.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“And it came to pass as He went . . . shall be exalted.”—*Luke* xiv. 1-12.

Introduction.—A straight sword will not go into a curved scabbard. (*Eph.* vi. 17.) His sword is straight (*Ps.* xxxiii. 4), and it will only fit a right and true human scabbard. In this Gospel the intention of the Master was good, but that of the Pharisee was evil; the sword of Jesus Christ was straight, but the consciences and hearts of the Pharisees were a crooked scabbard. We may correct the imperfections in ourselves by observing them. The lessons which Jesus Christ teaches us in this Gospel are—

I. *To show mercy.*—He saw, and at once He healed the poor dropsical man. He waited not—1) for a request; 2) the end of the feast; 3) to sit down Himself. We learn to give instant help when we can do so. (*Prov.* iii. 28.) For (*Prov.* xxvii. 1). Note (1 *John* iii. 17): ‘seeth,’ not hath seen. Joseph ‘made haste.’ (*Gen.* xlii. 30.)

II. *To seek our neighbour's salvation.*—The Pharisees, time, and place hindered not our Lord's good work. He acted first, and reasoned afterwards. (*Prov.* xxiv. 11.) The mission of the Seventy. (*Luke* x. 4.) Why? that they might, with all speed, hasten on their work of salvation. Gehazi's commission. (2 *Kings* iv. 29.) Ass not to be left in pit, or sinner in sin.

III. *To banish evil thoughts.*—The Pharisees were reprov'd, although they had never spoken: their thoughts were judged. (*Jer.* xxiii. 23, 24.) Realize God's all-seeing Presence, and so seek to keep the heart pure.

IV. *Not to be reasoned out of doing good.*—All the observation of the Pharisees could not prevent our Lord from doing good. All the mocking could not keep Noah from building the ark. All the threatening could not stop the preaching of Peter and John. (*Acts* iv. 19, 30.)

V. *To walk humbly.*—To take the last place, from a spirit of true humility.

VI. *To consecrate the actions of common life.*—At this feast the body was healed, and the mind instructed. At meals feed the mind and body too. (2 *Kings* iv. 40, 41.)

SERMON 593.

THE RICHES OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“In everything ye are enriched by Him.”—1 *Cor.* i. 5.

Introduction.—This is spoken to the Corinthians as being Christians in deed and in truth; the words apply to all who have Jesus Christ in the soul, for He is ‘Lord of all,’ and they have all things in Him. He is the great treasure hidden in the field of the soul (Matt. xiii. 44); which treasure is revealed by faith as an earnest of future blessedness. (Ps. xxxi. 19.) There are riches of the world, which reveal their vanity in the quickness of their transit and in the needs to which they fail to minister, as giving neither satisfaction, nor profit, nor fruit. The differences between the riches of Jesus Christ and the riches of the world are fourfold.

I. *They are enduring.*—They never can be spent, and their possessors left poor. This is the sadness of the world; even to the holy it must so very soon pass away from them: all its possessions are only ours for a time. It is a glorious thought, that the riches of Jesus Christ are ours for ever.

II. *They are in every place.*—They are the riches of heaven and of earth, too; as co-extensive as is the fear and love of God. They can say (Ps. cxix. 63). ‘The rich man could not take his riches out of this world.’ (Luke xii. 20.) Dives was wretched and tormented in Hades. (Luke xvi. 23.) The holy carry their riches everywhere with them; they are valuable here, still more so hereafter.

III. *They include all things.*—(1 *Cor.* iii. 22, 23.)—We ‘are complete in Him,’ ‘in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.’ There is a limit to earthly wealth, however great it may be; but no limit, save the capacity of the soul, to the riches of Jesus Christ. The more riches we are able to receive, the larger is the measure which He gives to us.

IV. *They are true riches.*—They alone satisfy and fill the soul. A hungry body is bad enough, but a hungry and famished soul is far worse; ever bearing about with it as it does a sense of poverty and desolation; a want that nothing in this world is able to supply. Rich, in divine knowledge, grace, and feeling, with a bright hope beyond the grave; this is to be truly rich.

Epilogue.—Seek we to gain these real riches. May we hearken to His counsel Who said (Rev. iii. 18).

SERMON 594.THANKSGIVING.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)“I thank my God always on your behalf.”—1 *Cor.* i. 4.

Introduction.—S. Paul, in common with all other saints, used thanksgiving to excite a pleasing joy in the soul. When the holy soul is more than usually tried, for its reparation it dwells, by special meditation, upon God’s past mercies, and makes an act of thanksgiving both profound and devout; and whilst the intimate affection of the heart is softened by a full act of devotion, the mind is enlarged, disposed, and opened to receive the influence of divine sweetness. The reflex action of thanksgiving has caused it to be compared to a ray of the sun, which illumines by being concentrated, refracted, and reflected. When the minstrel played, Elisha prophesied in his thanksgiving. (2 *Kings* iii. 15.) When the Blessed Virgin magnified the Lord, her spirit rejoiced. (Luke i. 46, 47; *Psa.* xcii. 3, 4.) We ought to thank God for—

I. *Our Creation.*—Life and being are blessings. No life is given in vain, although it ends in death. It is a mighty gift to call into being an immortal soul, endowed with sense, knowledge, etc.

II. *Our Regeneration.*—A new creation for us in holy Baptism; a creation in a time and into a state of grace, and a fellowship amongst Christians. Rejoice in the birthday of the spirit.

III. *Our Restoration.*—The Passion restores all those defects which we incur from sin. We are ‘healed’ by His ‘stripes.’ (*Isa.* liii. 5.)

IV. *Our Resurrection.*—Through the death and rising again of Jesus Christ. Now we look not at the grave but at Paradise; not at the death but at the birthday of immortality.

V. *Our Education.*—Amidst so many dangers and ignorances, by the spirit of counsel and by the guiding of the Holy Ghost.

Epilogue.—Thanksgiving—1) consecrates the past; 2) blesses the present; and 3) gilds the future.

SERMON 595.

THE LOVING SPIRIT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”—

Matt. xxii. 40.

Introduction.—Against this spirit of love, which forms the subject of the Lord's teaching in this day's Gospel, we have arrayed the devil, acting by suggestions; the flesh by delights; the world by affections. We require, therefore, a strong and well-founded love to resist all these enemies. We must love—1) wisely, lest we be seduced; 2) sweetly, lest we be allured; 3) firmly, lest we become oppressed and discouraged. The loving spirit is to be desired and cultivated. For—

I. *It is an epitome of the Law.*—(*Gal.* v. 14; *Rom.* xiii. 10.)—Hence the sufficiency of love. ‘If you cannot investigate books; study all the volumes of sermons; penetrate into all the secrets of Holy Scripture; hold fast by love, whence depends all else.’ (Aug.) That no one may have any excuse in the Day of Judgment, God willed so to consummate and shorten his Word, and render it so plain, that all can read and understand it. Holy Scripture is the treasure hidden in the field; if thou art unable to find it, thou wilt be quite secure if the one pearl of love be carried under the tongue.

II. *It is most easily cherished.*—1) No estate is exempt from love, which exists in the companionship of poverty and infirmity. It requires not any outward service to exist. (*Deut.* xxx. 11-15.) 2) It makes all burdens and offerings to be light. (*Matt.* xi. 30.) Jacob's servitude for Rachel. (*Gen.* xxix. 20.) ‘A two-horse cart, which carries weight without distressing the beasts who bear it.’ (Aug.)

III. *It is most acceptable to God.*—It is the grace of graces, without which all the other graces are not grateful to God, Who loves the love by which He Himself is loved. (*Prov.* viii. 17.)

IV. *It is most profitable.*—With a loving spirit all things are present; without it, all things are absent. (Aug.) Where love is, what can be absent? (*1 Cor.* xiii. 2-9; *Rom.* viii. 28.)

Epilogue.—The first three commandments treat of the love of God; last seven, of the love of man. Love is the root of the green tree of good works. Oh! kill not the spiritual life at its source.

SERMON 596.

HOW GOD MUST BE LOVED.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, etc.”—*Matt.* xxii. 37.

Introduction.—The human heart cannot rest without loving. It must love either heavenly or earthly things. If the heart love earthly things, it is comparable with earth; cold, heavy, and tardy towards all that is good. (*Matt.* xxiv. 12.) If the heart love heavenly things, it is comparable with Paradise; placed high above the deluge of this world's sin and sorrow, and watered by the river of love which flows in four streams towards God, towards parents, towards friends; and for God's sake, towards enemies. We must love God, Who is the fountain of love—

I. *Strongly.*—The holy, loving soul says (*Cant.* viii. 6); it cannot be resisted (*Rom.* viii. 38, 39). A man is strong—
1) Who fights bravely for God, like David. (*1 Sam.* xvii. 32.)
2) For his country, like a soldier. 3) Who bursts all fetters asunder, like Samson. (*Judges* xvi. 7-12.) So strong love fights for God and heaven, and breaks asunder all bonds and fetters of sin.

II. *Wisely.*—To live in His love. For (*1 John* iv. 8). Hence we must know Him. ‘Nothing can be loved unless it be known.’ (*Aug.*) As Moses cast Pharaoh's crown from his head (*Jos. Ant.* ii. x.), so do we the crown of God's baptismal love by our sin. (*Lam.* v. 16.) To love wisely, is to love God, for His—1) creation of us (*Gen.* i. 37), leading man to say (*Ps.* ciii. 1). 2) Redemption (*Rev.* i. 6.) For (*John* xv. 13.) 3) Providence.

III. *Ardently.*—By devout meditation. (*Ps.* xxxix. 3.) Ardent, fervent love is likened to fire. (*Luke* xii. 49.)
1) Ascending. (*Phil.* iii. 20.) 2) Purifying. 3) Enlightening. As (*Lev.* vi. 12, 13), so on altar of heart, fire of ardent, living love is ever to burn, nourished by preaching. From this fire all spiritual sacrifices are kindled.

IV. *Constantly.*—Lest should fail spiritual—1) taste; 2) sight; 3) vigour. To-morrow must not undo to-day.

Epilogue.—To love God is to possess Him for time and for eternity.

SERMON 597.

THE CLAIMS OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.”—*Matt. xxii. 27.*

Introduction.—It is a common saying that love ascends, not descends; proved in the case of parents who love their children far more than their children love them. It is true of our Common Parent, Jesus Christ. Whose love descends upon us, rather than does ours ascend to Him. ‘I have loved you’ (John xiii. 34; xv. 12) is His constant assertion; not ‘ye have loved Me.’ Our unloving ingratitude is our great ignominy. Correct it by the thought (Luke xii. 24). Jesus Christ claims our first and highest love. For He is—

I. *Altogether Lovely.*—Not alone as God; being the highest wisdom, goodness, power, majesty, and the like, but also as man. He was loving—1) In His person. (Ps. xlv. 2.) Hence His disciples so readily followed Him; hence the people prayed for His continued Presence. (Luke iv. 42.) 2) In speech. (Luke vi. 22; Ps. xlv. 2; John vii. 45.) ‘Men clave to Him, delighted equally by His speech and appearance. Of Whom the voice was so sweet.’ (Bern.) 3) In His several graces and virtues. In His affability, humility, innocence, mercy, compassion, He received all who came to Him. He touched the leper, etc. (Matt. viii. 3). He comforted the palsied man. (Matt. ix. 2.) Compassionated the accused woman. (John viii. 10, 11.) True of Him. (Isa. xlii. 3.)

II. *Altogether Loving.*—Jesus Christ very greatly loved us. (Hosae. xi. 4.) 1) Incarnate for our sake; enduring all the suffering of this lowly life, cold, hunger, etc. 2) Our Teacher and Leader by example and word; the Great Physician and Healer of our diseases. All of which benefits are so many bands of love. (2 Cor. v. 14.) For (Isa. liii. 4.) 3) Our spiritual food in the Holy Eucharist. (John vi. 51.) ‘I laid meat unto them.’ (Hos. xi. 4.) He shows His love by buying us, feeding us, rewarding us in heaven.

III. *Altogether like unto us.*—Not of necessity, but by the impulse of His love and will. (Heb. ii. 17.) As—1) our Father. (Isa. ix. 6; Gal. iv. 6.) 2) Our brother. (John xx. 17; Rom. viii. 29.) 3) Our bridegroom. (Matt. ix. 15; 2 Cor. xi. 11.)

Epilogue.—True is (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) For there is (Eph. vi. 24.)

SERMON 598.

DECEIT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“One of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him.”—*Matt.* xxii. 35.

Introduction.—Asked not to learn, but to entrap and confound Him; asked in a spirit of deceit. Deceit and stratagem have played a conspicuous part in the history of the world. An old saw, ‘He is worthy of praise who deceives an enemy.’ (Lucian.) ‘Under the pretext of good the wicked plot their deceits.’ (De la Hay.) ‘Impia sub dulci melle venena latent.’ (Ovid.) ‘The fowler pipes with the sweet reed, whilst he deceives the bird.’ (Cato.) Troy fell by the deceit of the wooden horse. Hannibal spared the possessions of his direst enemy, Fabius Maximus, to make him become suspected by the Senate, and so lose his command. The Romans, besieged by the Goths, when starving threw their bread over the walls to deceive the enemy. Epaminondas armed the statues of the gods at night, and, to animate the soldiers, declared in the morning that the gods had armed themselves on their behalf. Yet all deceit is—

I. *A prostitution of goodness.*—1) Of blood-ties. Cain and Abel. ‘Cain talked with Abel’ (Gen. iv. 8), persuaded him to go to the field. 2) Of forgiveness: Simeon and Levi, in the matter of Dinah. (Gen. xxxiv. 16-25.) 3) Of public religion: Jezebel’s fast. (1 Kings xxi. 9-12.) 4) Of personal holiness: Laban an idolater; for gain to retain Jacob, said ‘the Lord.’ (Gen. xxx. 27.) 5) Of friendship: Doeg, the Edomite, praised David so as to arouse Saul’s hate. (1 Kings xvi. 18.) 6) Of truth: Herod’s reason for slaying the holy Baptist. (Mark vi. 26.) Herod feared John. 7) Of charity or almsgiving: Judas and Mary. (John xii. 4-7.) 8) Of justice: Absalom’s deceit. ‘I would do him justice.’ (2 Sam. xv. 3.); 9) Of holy ministration. (2 Cor. xi. 13, 14.)

II. *A sign of weakness.*—1) Mind; 2) physical; 3) spiritual. The resort of weak and craven spirits.

III. *A cause of severe punishment.*—All deceit is a deadly sin, and meets with a sure punishment. Note the ends of Jezebel, Herod, Absalom, Judas; the deceived seen to triumph, but the ark of truth ever rides above the waters.

Epilogue.—Seek sincerity towards—1) God; 2) your own heart; and 3) towards all men.

SERMON 509.

THE TRUE SON OF DAVID.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“They say unto Him, The Son of David.”—*Matt.* xxii. 42.

Introduction.—It is remarkable that our Blessed Lord is always spoken of, and to, as the ‘Son of David,’ not of Abraham or of Solomon. He was so called by the Jewish children (*Matt.* xxi. 9); by the woman of Canaan (*Matt.* xv. 22); by the blind man (*Luke* xviii. 38). S. Matthew once, secondarily calls Him ‘the Son of Abraham’ (*Matt.* i. 1); but His ordinary title was ‘Son of David.’ Why? Because of the promises made to David? Because our Lord took dignity as being the son of a king? Rather because Jesus Christ was the type of which David was the antitype; because David was the most like Him, of any of His ancestors after the flesh. We note that David resembled our Blessed Lord in—

I. *Birth.*—1) In form and countenance. (1 Sam. xvi. 12.) A fire in the face of Jesus Christ, and a Divine majesty in His eyes (*John* xviii. 6), teaching the lesson of humility before glory. 2) In tribe and birthplace: Judah and Bethlehem. 3) Humble human origin in both cases, and subsequent exaltation. So Gabriel (*Luke* i. 32).

II. *Grace and conversation.*—1) In goodness and mercy. Needy at cave Adullam. (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) So Jesus Christ. (*Matt.* xi. 28.) 2) In mercy and loving-kindness: mercy to Shimei (2 Sam. xvi. 11); to Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 7). So our Lord (*Luke* ix. 54-57), Who wept over Jerusalem, and said (*Matt.* v. 44). The lesson is the love of enemies.

III. *Suffering persecution.*—David, from Saul and Absalom, ascended the Mount of Olives weeping. Chief Priest and Pharisees are as Saul, whilst Judas is as Absalom. Jesus Christ ascended the Mount of Olives to suffer His agony in the garden.

IV. *Battles and victories.*—The one against visible, the other against invisible enemies.

V. *The administration of the kingdom.*—Both reigned in mercy and righteousness. David took justice on the Ammonites, as the Lord will one day avenge His saints.

Epilogue.—May Jesus Christ be your King.

SERMON 600.

THE CORDS OF LOVE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.”—*Matt.* xxii. 37.

Introduction.—(*Exod.* xxx. 13-17.)—The ‘ransom of souls.’ The shekel represents that love which all men ought to render to God. The ‘half shekel’ signifies that our love here is necessarily imperfect, and the other ‘half shekel’ will be paid when love is perfected in glory. Now the rich and the poor pay alike; since all can render love to God. Other offerings, as wisdom, nobility, strength, riches, etc., can only be offered by the few. Yet it is after all a difficult thing to many to love God, Who draws us with the cords of love, because they forget that—

I. *He is God, the Chief Good.*—God contains in Himself all good things, and all the perfections of good things either formally as taken absolutely, or eminently as being mingled with some other perfections. Hence (*Exod.* xxxiii. 19.) ‘In Thee all things remain; to Thee all things together hasten.’ (Greg Naz.) Infinitely—1) wise; government and plan of world and its contents; of other systems. 2) Good; procreation and preservation of all things; assigning pleasure to the lowest and the vilest of His creatures. 3) Merciful. (*Matt.* xxv. 45; *Ps.* lxviii. 5; *Jonah* iv. 11.) 4) Bountiful. (*Rev.* i. 16.)

II. *He is the Lord, the highest Benefactor.*—His love to man is manifested—1) By the manifold blessings which He communicates. 2) By His creating and adapting all things for man’s use. 3) By His gift of a body and soul more precious than mountains of gold. 4) By His enduring and unselfish love to us. (*Jer.* xxxi. 3.)

III. *He is thine.*—By such similitude and relationship as can exist between the Creator and His creature. Thine—1) Since thou, O man, art His image and likeness, through which comes the dower of supernatural grace and strength. 2) Since He is thy preserver, in Whom thou livest, etc. 3) Since He is thy exceeding great reward. (*Gen.* xv. 1.)

Epilogue.—As the magnet, by a natural impulse, ever points to the north, and does not rest until it so points and overcomes all impediments to this action, so ought the heart ever point to God, Who is the pole of the loving soul.

SERMON 601.

THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law?”—*Matt.* xx. 36.

Introduction.—As all God’s commandments are great, the lawyer thought by craft to entrap the Lord into making an invidious distinction. (Jerome.) Our Blessed Lord pronounced love to be the ‘first and great commandment;’ since it is—

I. *An end in itself.*—(1 Tim. i. 5.)—An end not of laws alone, but also of sacraments, graces, etc.; for it joins man to God.

II. *Comprehensive.*—(Rom. xiii. 10.)—It includes all the other commandments. He who loves God, loves all that God loves. ‘Love, and do as thou wilt.’ (Aug.)

III. *A Root and Fountain.*—The chiefest and highest offering to God. Rivers of gifts and graces flow from the fount of love, which is an offering of ourselves to God. So that (1 John iv. 16).

IV. *A manifestation.*—It shows who and what a man really is. Many are outwardly Christians; a life of love alone manifests their reality. (Aug.) Love is the measurer of souls. (Bern.)

V. *A Bond of Perfection.*—(Coloss. iii. 14.)—The life which unites and quickens the whole nature (Chrysos.); as the bolts are to a ship.

VI. *A great reward.*—(1 Cor. ii. 9; Matt. x. 42.)—Last labourers in the vineyard; the widow’s two mites.

VII. *Eternal.*—(1 Cor. xiii. 8)—Remains eternally in heaven. Other graces are as scaffolding, which is taken down when the building is finished.

Epilogue.—Seek to love God.

SERMON 602.

THE TREACHEROUS QUESTION.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VIII.)

“A lawyer asked Him a question, tempting Him.”—*Matt.* xxii. 35.

Introduction.—This spokesman of the Pharisees is a type of Satan, who tempts us to approach the person of Jesus Christ in one of the Articles of Faith, to try if it be possible to find somewhat in it to condemn. The unholy ever strive to square their belief to their practice. We note that this question, as asked by the lawyer, implied—

I. *A treacherous gathering.*—It was determined that this question should be asked in an assembly of the Pharisees which was convened against Jesus Christ. They hoped to subdue by numbers Him Whom they could not overcome by reason. They thought that if one spoke for all, and was triumphant, they could all share in his victory; but if he were worsted, the defeat would rest with himself alone. (Chrysos.) Thus all was done for the sake of men, forgetful of the small comfort it is to the defeated conscience, that others may not know of its humiliation. The Pharisaic spirit invites—1) A treacherous gathering of evil thoughts; 2) a base purpose; 3) an ignorant conclusion.

II. *A treacherous asking.*—The lawyer called that Lord ‘Master,’ of whom he would have scorned to be a disciple; and he asked about the greatest commandment, who himself did not observe the least. The pleadings and askings of unbelief are treacherous in their—1) Form; masking it under the guise of devotion. 2) Demands; asking for things above and beyond the mind’s legitimate range.

III. *A treacherous temptation.*—The question was asked, not for the sake of learning but to entrap the answerer. The sinner in like manner seeks to entrap his conscience, that so the majesty of truth may be—1) Deposed; 2) contradicted; 3) ignored.

Epilogue.—Remember (*Luke* xii. 47; *Rom.* ii. 13). A holy life asks no treacherous questions.

SERMON 603.

THE SIGNS OF LOVE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.”—*Matt.* xxii. 37.

Introduction.—Some are sure that they love God, and that God loves them. They can say (*Cant.* vi. 3); but the many feel rather (*Eccles.* ix. 2). Are we living in love? An important question, since (*1 John* iv. 16). Amongst the signs of love we note—

I. *Constant thought and speech.*—We are ever thinking of and speaking about those whom we love; delighting to be with them; solicitous to please them. Do we so think and speak about Jesus Christ? Are we ever joyed to rejoice Him?

II. *Frequent communication.*—We like to eat and drink with those whom we love; to do so is a pledge of friendship; to communicate to them all our thoughts, words, and deeds. Hence the reproach of Delilah. (*Judges* xvi. 15.) Do we open the heart to God?

III. *Implicit obedience.*—(*John* xv. 15, 23.—Hence David said (*Ps.* cxix. 11, 72, 127). We cannot love one, and yet not in all things seek to fulfil his wishes. Obedience is a sure test of our love for God. Apply it to your own lives.

IV. *Ready thanksgiving and glory.*—Returning instant thanks to God for His mercies, and before all things, desiring and seeking His glory. (*1 John* iv. 18.) The promptitude, ardour, and care with which the soul prepares for holy exercises is a proof of love.

V. *An intense hatred of sin.*—He who loves the light hates the darkness; he who loves holiness hates sin, which is opposed to it. God is light, goodness, and life; and he who loves Him cannot but hate sin, which is iniquity in the heart, darkness in the mind, and death in the soul.

VI. *Willing sacrifice.*—(*John* xv. 14.)—He who truly loves God is ready to give up all for His sake; to die rather than to sin. He feels with Joseph (*Gen.* xxxix. 9). Hence the martyrs testified to their love by their death.

VII. *Patient enduring.*—(*1 Cor.* xiii. 7.)—True love supports under all trial; it lightens every hardship; it makes the bitter sweet.

Epilogue.—Seek to realize these signs in your life.

SERMON 604.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“But when the Pharisees had heard . . . any more questions.”—*Matt. xx. 34-46.*

Introduction.—(*Gen. xxxii. 25.*)—Jacob represents the Jews, who, lame with one foot, acknowledged the Lord to be the Son of David, not the Son of God. Of these (*Ps. xviii. 45.*) Of the Gentiles (*Ps. xviii. 44.*) To fulfil this prophecy, let us hear and obey the teaching of the Lord. We note—

I. *The conspiracy of the wicked.*—The wicked unite when righteousness and truth are to be persecuted. 1) Disciples of Pharisees and Herodians (*Matt. xxii. 15.*) 2) Herod the ‘fox.’ (*Luke xiii. 32.*) Pilate. (*Luke xiii. 12.*) Dogs quarrel over a bone, but unite against a beggar. 3) The Athenians and Thebans were at enmity, until Philip of Macedon attacked the former; with whom the Thebans, fearing the nearness of war, made common cause. The Church should be united against heresy.

II. *The wonderful goodness of Jesus Christ.*—1) He answered the tempting lawyer plainly and truly, as if he were a disciple, instead of being ‘a merchant’ (*Hosea xii. 7.*) with sorry coin in his hand. 2) He taught the great lesson of neighbourly love. (*John xxi. 15.*)

III. *That true love must rest upon faith.*—Compare the question of the lawyer (*Matt. xxii. 36.*) with a question of Jesus Christ. (*Matt. xxii. 42.*) What of His divinity, omnipotence, truth, sacramental powers, and presence? Faith is as the material and body of a Christian man: love, as the form and soul; good works, as the pulse of the heart.

IV. *The great profit of Holy Scripture.*—Argument founded upon Psalms. (*Matt. xxii. 43.*) A sea (*2 Tim. iii. 16.*) containing depths in which ‘a lamb (the humble) may swim, and an elephant (the proud) drown.’ (*Greg.*) A light. (*2 Peter i. 19.*)

V. *A severe punishment awaits the wicked.*—(*Matt. xxii. 44.*) Jews, a type of Cain. Against whom. (*Gen. iv. 10.*)

VI. *Men are easily convicted, but not easily converted.*—(*Matt. xxii. 46.*) Answered not, but also believed not. Their pertinacity takes seven forms. (*Jude 11-14.*)

SERMON 605.

RENEWAL.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”—*Eph.* iv. 23.

Introduction.—There is this difference between the soul and the body: that the former, howsoever old it may have become, is capable of renewal; but we never read in Holy Scripture of an old man being made young. Sinners were converted, the sick healed, the dead raised; but youth once lost was never restored. Why? Because God never changes man from good to bad. Old age is more discreet, less sinful; nearer the eternal goal than youth. (*Job* xii. 12.) The soul is ever capable of renewal by divine grace. (*2 Cor.* v. 1). Which operates through—

I. *Virtual patience.*—1) Towards God, consists in receiving all His afflicting dispensations as coming from Him; ordained for good; without bitterness, or any other feeling than one of gratitude. (*Job* i. 21.) 2) Towards our neighbour, in exercising a spirit of loving forgiveness. (*Matt.* vi. 14.) A loving spirit renews the soul.

II. *Actual repentance.*—This consists in—1) Coming to the knowledge of sin. (*Luke* xv. 17.) 2) Forming a resolution of amendment. 3) Making a confession of sin. (*Ps.* xxxii. 5.) 4) Bringing forth fruit, meet for repentance. (*Matt.* iii. 8.) Of the whole. (*Eph.* iv. 22-25.)

III. *Cordial humility.*—As when a proud and vain soul really humbles itself from the depths of its heart; searching into—1) Its own weakness and strength. 2) Comparing itself with the law of God. 3) Musing upon its actual estate.

IV. *Liberal bounty.*—(*Luke* xi. 41.) When a man gives to others freely of these blessings, spiritual, moral, and material, with which God has enriched him, such bounty—1) softens; 2) satisfies; 3) rejoices the giver's heart.

V. *Divine love.*—(*Luke* vii. 47)—When the soul stands in the love of Jesus Christ, it is renewed and made young.

VI. *Supernal contemplation*—Thought upon—1) The power of God in creation. 2) The end of the world. 3) Heaven and hell. 4) Providence, etc.

Epilogue.—Renewal, with the help of divine grace, is in every one's power.

SERMON 606.

THE OLD AGE OF SIN.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”—*Eph.* iv. 23.

Introduction.—Of what value is this admonition, since hardly any one acknowledges that he is old? Many too, like the covetous, are in extreme age as indiscrete as if they were mere children. Yet ‘a man ought to be cautious in his government of self, in proportion to his age.’ (Senec.) ‘The sinner is, alas! old, let him be ever so young in years; at every period of life he needs the renewal of the Spirit. Sin is called old age, since it resembles it in many of its effects. For—

I. *It brings down the soul nigh to eternal death.*—Deadly sin, and eternal death and hell, are all very nigh to one another. The sinner has the unsheathed sword of God ever hanging over his head, which is only stayed from falling by the Divine compassion. (Job xix. 29.)

II. *It bows down the soul to earth.*—So is the body bent with old age. (Ps. xxxviii. 4; xvii. 11.) The sinner is so crushed under the weight of sin that he can scarcely raise his eyes to that heaven which he has forfeited. Yet (Eccles. vii. 29).

III. *It blinds the eyes of the soul.*—So does old age dim the bodily vision; as in the case of Isaac, who used his hands for his eyes. (Gen. xxvii. 1, 21.) The sinner sees not whither he is led by the devil. Did he see, he would retrace his steps. (Ps. cxix. 59, 101.)

IV. *It weakens the powers of the soul.*—So does old age weaken the body that it yields to the slightest pressure, and is soon prostrated. Sin causes the soul by weakness to fall under the slightest temptations.

V. *It brings a coldness to the soul.*—So does old age whiten the hair through the coldness of the system, just as sin eats the warmth of Divine love out of the heart.

Epilogue.—Seek through Divine grace to become ever fresh and ever sound. (Isa. xl. 31.)

SERMON 607.

THE CITY OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“He came into His own city.”—*Matt. ix. 1.*

Introduction.—Capernaum was noted for the miracles which the Lord performed in it, but more for his attachment to it. He often returned to it, and remained in it longer than in Nazareth; calling it His own city. (Ps. cxliv. 15.) ‘My people.’ (Exod. iii. 7.) This city is a type of the Christian soul, called His city, because—

I. *It willingly received Him.*—1) The Gadarenes besought Him to depart; the people of Capernaum—*a*) Received Him (Luke viii. 38-40) gladly; *b*) had great faith in Him: *c*) observed His commands; *d*) feared, loved, and honoured him; *e*) suffered Him to live amongst them. (Mark ii. 1.) 2) We receive Jesus Christ into the city of the soul—*a*) Gladly receiving His priests and hearing their words; *b*) resting in faith upon His Sacraments: *c*) striving to keep his commandments; *d*) honouring Him in the life and conversation. The cities of the devil were—1) Samaria (Luke ix. 52); 2) country of the Gergesenes (Matt. viii. 34); 3) Nazareth (Luke iv. 29).

II. *It eagerly heard the word of God.*—(Mark ii. 2.)—The city—1) Assembled to hear the word, as the lamb runs to the bleat of its dam; 2) fed upon it for spiritual growth and nourishment (1 Pet. ii. 2); 3) sought to obey it. The wicked soul, the city of the devil, hears not. And so (Matt. x. 14).

III. *It excelled in faith and hope.*—The faith in Capernaum was 1) Great. The bearers of the palsied man uncovered the roof; hence, ‘seeing their faith’ (Matt. ix. 2), it overcame all obstacles. 2) One and uniform, ‘their’ not his ‘faith.’ 3) A practical faith; it carried the poor cripple. (James ii. 18.)

IV. *It had great love towards its neighbour.*—These men loved and tried to help the poor man. (John xiii. 35; Gal. vi. 2.) The prophet’s four animals with one spirit a type. (Ezek. i. 12.) The city of the devil is full of hate and discord.

V. *It had the fear of God.*—‘We have seen strange things to-day.’ (Luke v. 26.) It was in a middle state between hope and fear; between Bethel, ‘house of God,’ and Hai, ‘abyss.’ (Gen. xiii. 3.) In prosperity the mind should dwell upon Hai; in adversity upon Bethel.

Epilogue.—Seek by the exercise of these Christian graces to make your souls become the City of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 608.

THE SEA OF THE WORLD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)“He entered into a ship, and passed over.”—*Matt.* ix. 1.

Introduction.—This ‘ship’ signifies repentance, into which Jesus Christ enters when any one sincerely repents, being anxious about his salvation; and which carries the penitent in safety over the tossing billows of the sea of this world; which is likened to a sea, as being—

I. *Restless and inquiet.*—(*Isa.* lvii. 20, 21.)—The world is disquieted—1) By deceptions; false religions, false philosophies, false morals and theories. The pleadings and promptings of the Evil One sorely perplex and trouble the world. (*Isa.* v. 20.) 2) By strifes and dissensions, flowing from feelings of anger, jealousy, and pride. 3) By a certain fear of the coming future, which never leaves those who cling to this world alone, which is as a bear or lion. (*Lam.* iii. 10.)

II. *Insatiable.*—(*Eccles.* i. 7.)—Three deadly rivers, especially, run into the sea of this world. (1 *John* ii. 16.) Yet it remains as unsatisfied as before. Lusts, riches, and honours cannot satisfy an immortal soul. The world craves and craves in vain for—1) Immortality. 2) Perfection. 3) Independence of a higher power.

III. *Bitter.*—Sea-water is salt and bitter as that of Marah. (*Exod.* xv. 23.) This bitterness is caused—1) By sorrow and care. 2) By the separations of the world. 3) By its disappointments: promising great things and giving small.

Epilogue.—The sea of this world is—1) quieted by the presence of Jesus Christ. (*Matt.* viii. 26.) 2) Is fulfilled by the gifts of grace. (2 *Cor.* vi. 10.) 3) Is sweetened (*Psa.* xciv. 19) by—*a*) evaporation, or heavenly contemplation; *b*) by filtration through earth, or the thought of death.

SERMON 609.

THE SONS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Son, be of good cheer.”—*Matt.* ix. 2.

Introduction.—Man was created in the beginning a son or child of God; and as such he was—1) Free. By sin he became a captive. (*Isa.* lii. 2.) The soul is the ‘captive daughter.’ 2) Beautiful. (*Cant.* vii. 6.) By sin his beauty was defiled. (*Lam.* iv. 8.) 3) Adorned with graces. These lost by falling into sin. (*Luke* x. 10.) 4) Enriched by wisdom. Sin has darkened wisdom and knowledge. (*Rom.* i. 21.) Jesus Christ came to restore these lost gifts, *i.e.* to restore man to his old sonship, which, in relation to God, implies—

I. *Likeness.*—The son is necessarily in some respects like his father. The image of the Trinity was impressed upon man. (*Gen.* i. 26.) The Father, in man’s power to resist the attacks of sin and Satan. The Son, in man’s wisdom, leading him to distinguish between good and evil; to choose the former and reject the latter. The Holy Ghost, in man’s understanding, enabling him to progress and go on from grace to grace, from strength to strength. (*Gen.* xl. 1, 9-14.) The butler in prison represents the soul in the prison of the body, saying (*Rom.* vii. 24); ‘three branches’ represent the three powers, memory, will, and intellect; the ‘ripe grapes’ contrition, confession, and satisfaction. The wine of contrition pressed into the cup of the soul. (*Psa.* lx. 3.) Old reading; of ‘compunction.’

II. *Love.*—Sons by nature love their fathers. We should love Jesus Christ (*Rev.* i. 5; *Eph.* v. 2), Who hath, by His resurrection. (*1 Pet.* i. 3.) As superiors are loved by inferiors, so ought God to be loved by us, Who hath given the inferior creatures for our profit and glory. The three questions (*John* xxi. 15-18): 1) ‘More than these?’ the creatures of the world. 2) ‘Me?’ then love thy enemies. 5) ‘Me?’ more than thyself; My will rather than thine own will.

III. *Patience.*—(*Heb.* xii. 4-10.)—When God corrects us we should rejoice. Chastening is a blessing. (*Ps.* xciv. 12.) 1) It weans the soul from the world; 2) purifies it from sin; 3) prepares it for heaven. (*Matt.* xxv. 34.) Fable of ‘The Thief and his Mother’ admits of a sacred application.

IV. *Confidence.*—Sons in their need and trouble fly to their fathers. David forgave and lamented over his slain and disobedient son Absalom. (*2 Sam.* xviii. 5, 33.) The Prodigal was blessed and forgiven (*Luke* xv. 23), and clothed with the ‘robe’ of grace; the ‘ring’ of love; the ‘shoes’ of good affections.

Epilogue.—Seek to vindicate your heavenly sonship.

SERMON 610.

INDIFFERENCE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“They brought to Him a man sick of the palsy.”—*Matt.* ix. 2.

Introduction.—This palsy, or paralysis of body, is a type of a like paralysis of soul, which renders it careless, torpid, and indifferent; causing it to lie upon the couch of sloth during the noonday of God’s grace and opportunity. This peculiar palsy of soul is well expressed by the old word *Acédia*, which is a deadly disease to the spiritual life. *Acedia*, or indifference—

I. *Prevents spiritual progress.*—If I should say that no indifferent person could attain heaven, I should seem to utter a paradox, which is nevertheless most true. They to whom a voluntary paralysis of the feet of the mind, that is, of the affections, clings, are deprived of the hope of heaven. ‘O unhappy soul, which pants not to run in the way of holiness, along which, unless thou runnest, thou lovest the reward!’ (Victor; 1 Cor. ix. 24.) ‘Run,’ not walk indifferently. (Rev. xxi. 8.) The ‘fearful’ are the timid and indifferent, who make no effort to conquer sin. ‘The indifferent mind falls into a thousand sins.’ (Greg.) Indifference deprives the soul—1) Of the hope of heaven; 2) of the fear of hell; 3) of the value of all good examples.

II. *Breeds a spirit of discontent.*—Israelites journeying to Canaan, a type of the Christian journeying to heaven, who passes over the Red Sea of baptism, and is fed by the manna of the Eucharist; and who are the subjects of as many providences as were the Israelites in the days of old. At Hormah, a fit of indifference, the ‘soul of the people’ was much discouraged because of the way. (Num. xxi. 4.) Only two out of six hundred thousand men reached the promised land. Indifference—1) Magnifies difficulties and hardships; 2) overlooks mercies; 3) takes a low view of the responsibilities of life.

III. *Is contradicted by Scriptural example.*—1) At the Nativity the shepherds ‘came with haste’ (Luke ii. 16); and the Magi lost no time after the star appeared. 2) Prodigal quickly returned, and was forgiven. (Luke xv. 18-20.) Mindful of (Eccles. ix. 10). 3) (Ps. civ. 18.) For ‘conies,’ old reading is ‘hares,’ being swift of foot.

Epilogue.—Subdue, banish, utterly abhor and cast indifference from thy soul.

SERMON 611.

THE SEA OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“He entered into a ship, and passed over.”—*Matt. ix. 1.*

Introduction.—This ‘ship’ signifies the humanity of Jesus Christ, and the ‘city’ is—1) Literally, Capernaum. 2) Allegorically, the Church Militant, in which He comes to us in the Sacrament of the Altar. (*Matt. xxviii. 20.*) 3) Morally, the soul animated by Divine grace. (*John xiv. 23.*) 4) Anagogically, the new Jerusalem. We will confine ourselves to the moral meaning, and consider the sea of the human soul, in which sea we are so involved in divers thoughts and affections, that it is most dangerous. Since—

I. *It is inscrutable.*—1) The soul is deep. (*Ps. lxiv. 6.*) Who has measured its depth? (*Ecclus. i. 2*) save Him? (*1 Chron. xxviii. 9.*) We hardly ever descend to measure the springs or founts of our thoughts and actions. The motive power of the soul lies hidden far away, and secondary actions are often mistaken for primary impulses. 2) It is deceitful. (*Jer. xvii. 9.*) It glosses over much; gives wrong impressions; does not deal truly with itself, and so is hard to be found out. 3) It is ‘desperately wicked.’ (*Jer. xvii. 9.*) This wickedness has made it dark, and difficult to be fathomed.

II. *It is unstable.*—Being agitated by the wind of various temptations. No person but One can quiet this sea. (*Matt. viii. 26.*) ‘Thou hast made us, O Lord, for Thee, and the soul is unquiet until it rests in Thee.’ Hence we too often take the tone of passing events, and allow an undue action of others upon ourselves. Many remain for hardly two days in a like state of mind: such are easily led away from God.

III. *It is doubtful.*—1) On account of its poverty; lacking those graces by means of which it ought to live and steer its course. Not so with Jesus Christ. (*Isa. lv. 9.*) 2) Being misled by evil thoughts, and so rendered doubtful as to what is the proper course to take.

Epilogue.—When a ship is struggling in a heavy sea, and the provisions are well nigh gone, all must labour most earnestly to bring her as soon as possible into port. Oh! place the ship of the Lord into a place of safety without delay.

SERMON 612.

THE PALSY OF SIN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“A man sick of the palsy.”—*Matt.* ix. 2.

Introduction.—Sin, not in itself, but in its accidents, is capable of becoming the punishment of sin. 1) The act of sin produces sure affliction : if inward, anger and envy distract the mind; if outward, sin wearies the body. 2) The effect of sin produces bitter consequences, which make by moral retribution sin to become its own avenger. 3) The thought of sin even, causes the removal of grace, so that the soul is left helpless and defenceless to its passions and temptations. (*Rom.* i. 28.) Palsy in its sad work upon the body is a true type of the action of sin. For—

I. *It causes a trembling.*—The body is deprived of courage and strength. So Adam, after the Fall, trembled and hid himself from the voice of God. (*Gen.* iii. 8, 10.) Cain, in his fear, had for ‘a mark,’ according to the tradition, a trembling of the head, by which he was known and shunned by man, as excommunicated and punished by God. Esau trembled for his life, and sold his birthright for the food of beasts. (*Gen.* xxv. 30, 34.) The wicked fear with trembling, thinking upon the four last things. (*Ps.* lv. 4, 5 ; liii. 5.)

II. *It causes immobility.*—This leads the sinner—1) To remain still; which is highly sinful. (*Rev.* iii. 15-17.) Others pass him by, whilst he brings nothing to perfection. 2) To waver and stagger from the right hand of prosperity to the left hand of adversity. As the Israelites walked in the desert; puffed up by God’s mercies; rebellious when in want. 3) Walking backwards; looking backwards like Lot’s wife (*Gen.* xix. 26); having lost all relish for God’s mercies and spiritual food.

III. *It causes insensibility.*—Body loses its fine sensational power. 1) To the Divine sweetness. (*1 Cor.* ii. 14.) 2) To the temptations of the devil; hence a ready consent is given to sin. 3) To our own special defects, that we feel not our sin.

Epilogue.—The healing of Jesus Christ restores us from this disease; and His grace renews and makes us whole.

SERMON 613.

SIN IN THOUGHT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)“Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?”—*Matt.* ix. 4.

Introduction.—David asks (*Ps.* xxiv. 3, 4). Purity of heart is needful for the man who would ascend the ‘hill of the Lord;’ *i.e.* attain to eternal blessedness. The heart must be kept free from every polluted, harmful, crooked, and proud thought. For—

I. *God will judge the secrets of the heart.*—(*Heb.* iv. 13; *Rev.* xx. 12.) In which are recorded not only our deeds and our words, but also the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (*1 Cor.* iv. 5.) For (*Jer.* xvii. 10) the most searching inquisition will be made into the most hidden thoughts, desires, and intentions. Hence, ‘that is known to God in the heart which is not known to man by deed. According to the prophecy (*Zeph.* i. 12) Jesus Christ, as ‘with candles,’ will search every nook and corner of the soul, and the smallest sinful thought will be revealed.

II. *Three stages of sin in thought.*—1) The suggestion. It came to Eve by Satan; she yielded to it, but it did not banish her from Paradise. Suggestions come from evil companions, books, occasions, etc. 2) The delight in the suggestion. Eve had pleasure in Satan’s suggestion; she did not banish it at once as she ought to have done. 3) The consent of the will to the suggestion. It was this which caused Adam to fall, and which brought death into the world.

III. *The teaching of the death of Absalom.*—(*2 Sam.* xviii. 9, 14.) Our life is a warfare, and our hair, our thoughts, etc., ought whilst on service to be confined in the helmet of the fear of God. Absalom lost his life through his own fault.

Epilogue.—O Christian, say not that it is a light matter what you think; that your thoughts are your own. By one thought Lucifer lost all. God pardons for one repentant, as he condemns for one unholy thought.

SERMON 614.

THE GROUNDS OF HOPE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)"Son, be of good cheer."—*Matt.* ix. 2.

Introduction.—(*Deut.* xxiv. 6.)—'Nether' immoveable, mystically signifies fear. 'Upper' quickly revolving signifies hope. Hope exalts, fear depresses; both are needful; one millstone of no avail. (*Greg.*) We ought to hope, lest we despair; to fear, lest we presume. Man has many causes of fear; spiritual burdens; the difficulty of gaining pardon, of advancing in grace, of overcoming evil habits. Bodily burdens, weakness, disease, sorrow, anxiety, needs of all kinds. Listen, O hopeless soul, to the voice of Jesus Christ, bidding you 'be of good cheer.' For—

I. *God is above us, Who is both able and willing to help us.*—To cure, as in this Gospel, both body and soul. Is thine a great evil, sin or disease? (*Luke* vi. 19.) Do you doubt His power? (*Mark* vi. 56.) 1) He is just but also merciful. (*Ps.* cxlv. 9.) Hence the expression, 'rich in mercy.' (*Eph.* ii. 4.) Hence He wept over lost Jerusalem. (*Luke* xix. 41.) Judgment is called the Lord's 'strange work.' (*Isa.* xxviii. 21.) Hence His grief (*Gen.* vi. 6); 2) God is also our Father, Who hath made us after His own image and likeness; 3) He bought us by His blood.

II. *A gulf of desperation beneath us.*—Worse than all the miseries of the world, infinitely more wretched than all other miseries. Into this gulf every one who despairs plunges himself, and he leaps from the frying-pan into the fire; from small and temporal to severe and eternal afflictions; and like a foolish shipwrecked man he prefers to sink rather than try to swim. The Martyrs thanked their executioners for giving them eternal life.

III. *A goodly company who have gone before us.*—Laden with like or even with heavier sins, who have yet attained the heavenly goal. The Magdalene, S. Paul, S. Matthew, the penitent thief, and others.

IV. *Behind us our good works.*—Our sufferings for God; our wrestlings with sin; the tears of repentance which we have shed in past times. Our dead sins call forth a song of thanksgiving as over a slain enemy. (*Exod.* xiv. 31.)

V. *Within us desolation exciting us to hope.*—S. Martin was most secure amongst the robbers, since he knew that God's compassion was principally felt in trials.

Epilogue.—Hope—1) Ever; 2) firmly; 3) thankfully.

SERMON 615.

THE SPIRITUAL HOUSE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Go unto thy house.”—*Matt.* ix. 6.

Introduction.—Before the ‘man sick of the palsy’ was actually healed; before he could either walk or stand; he was bidden to go unto his house; he was not to linger and loiter about; duties were waiting for his fulfilment of them; he had a duty also to himself to perform at home. The sinner when he is aroused from the lethargy and the paralysis of sin is likewise called home—to himself—and is bidden by the quickening Spirit, ‘Go unto thy house;’ the house of—

I. *Thy conscience.*—1) To guard it with all care, lest the enemy should break into it, or the thief despoil it. (*Prov.* iv. 23.) 2) To renew and to renovate it after its sad neglect; adding grace to grace, and ornament to ornament. 3) To reside in it, in quiet peaceable thought; communing with one’s own heart. Think over thy thoughts, words, and deeds. Many live in other people’s houses all their lives long; judging, scandalizing, busying about the concerns of others. 4) Commit the house wherein thou dwellest to God’s keeping. (*Ps.* cxxvii. 1.)

II. *God.*—The Holy Church and the Temple of the Lord is our house. God’s house, built and dedicated to His Name and glory, a place in which His praises are sung, His Sacraments administered. It is our house, too, in which—1) We serve God; 2) gain pardon for past sin; 3) receive grace for the future; 4) learn about God (*Ps.* lxxxiv. 1-3, 4); offer ourselves to God.

III. *Heaven.*—Our lasting house which is 1) Eternal (1 *Cor.* v. 1); 2) glorious (*Col.* iii. 1); 3) spacious room for all (*John* xiv. 2); 4) the house of our calling.

Epilogue.—Let Conscience, Church, and Heaven be chambers of one house. Of which (*Ps.* cxxii).

SERMON 616.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

And He entered into a ship . . . such power unto men.”—*Matt. ix. 1-9.*

Introduction.—A great crowd (Luke v. 19) witnessed this miracle. Mingle with it, and learn from—

I. *Jesus Christ.*—1) Justice. Rejected by the Gergesenes He visited and healed in Capernaum. Rejected by the Jews, the Gospel was given to the Gentiles. (Acts xiii. 46.) Privileges not valued will be withdrawn. 2) Humility. The house was tiled (Luke v. 19), not flagged, as are the better class of Eastern houses. 3) Mercy and suavity. The palsied man the Lord called ‘Son;’ not being ashamed of his lowly and diseased condition. (Matt. xi. 29.) 4) Faith. ‘Be of good cheer;’ trust in Me, being destitute of all things. 5) Thoroughness. ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee.’ Bodily suffering often flows from mental trouble. A ‘rod of wickedness.’ (Ezek. vii. 11.) Healing the soul first, the body was more easily and thoroughly cured. Leave no root of sin in the heart. (Heb. xii. 15.)

II. *The palsied man.*—1) The blessing of health, which ought to be a cause of thankfulness. Palsied man was carried on a bed, a helpless cripple. 2) The power of a new life. a) He arose; to high and heavenly thoughts. b) Took up his couch; raising his body from earthly pleasures. c) Went into his house, his own sacred place (Deut. xxiv. 10, 11), minding his own concerns.

III. *The bearers.*—‘Men brought in.’ (Luke v. 18.) 1) Care for the sick. They carried, and left no means untried to bear the palsied to Jesus Christ. 2) Value of good associates: kind men willing to help and to do good. To S. Paul. (Acts xxvii. 22, 37.) Laban blessed by Jacob. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom. 3) All hinderances to gaining Jesus Christ can be overcome. (Luke xix. 3-7.)

IV. *The multitude.*—(Luke v. 19.)—1) To avoid a worldly spirit. Christ denied the palsied man access; but when healed allowed him a ready egress. The world scorns the unfortunate, and flatters the prosperous. Joseph and his brethren at home and in Egypt. 2) To glorify God for His mercies and benefits.

SERMON 617.

THE WAY OF LIFE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“ See then that ye walk circumspectly.”—*Eph.* v. 15.

Introduction.—To ‘ walk circumspectly,’ is to live holily. Our present life is a journey, which tends either to eternal life or to eternal death. Each day bears its own issue, and (*Eccles.* vi. 8) no one walks circumspectly, who walks to his destruction; rather he ought to consider the beginning, the middle, and the end of the way. Consider whence thou art, O man, and blush; what thou art, and groan; whither thou art going, and tremble. In order to ‘ walk circumspectly,’ note some of the difficulties and dangers of the way.

I. *The danger of mistaking the way.*—This is occasioned by—1) The number of paths which run almost parallel to the path of heaven. We are evil in many ways, but holy in one. The middle is but one; the extremities are many. (*Matt.* vii. 14; *Ps.* cvii. 4.) Hence the need of the prayer. (*Ps.* xxv. 4, 5.) 2) The fewness of the travellers. (*Isa.* xxxiii. 8.) Hence, like Lot, it is not safe to dwell amongst the wicked. 3) The obscurity of the way, caused by false teaching and want of dogma. (*John* xii. 35.) 4) The deceit and guile of the hypocrites.

II. *The obstacles in the way.*—(*Isa.* xxiv. 17, 18.)—1) Temptations. (*Prov.* xxiii. 27.) 2) Difficulties. (*Acts* xiv. 22.) 3) Impediments. (*Mark* x. 23.)

III. *The dangers from robbers.*—(*Luke* x. 30.)—Descending from heavenly contemplation to earthly cares. (*Prov.* i. 17.) They who have theirs fixed in heaven, easily escape the snares of earth.

IV. *The defects in the travellers themselves.*—Many walking along the way of the Lord, suffer from—1) Hunger. (*Matt.* xv. 32.) Perishing for the want of heavenly bread. Hence the command. (*1 Kings* xix. 7.) 2) Weakness. (*Gen.* xxxiii. 13.) Making too much speed. (*Prov.* xix. 2.) 3) Weariness. (*Num.* xxi. 4; *Gal.* vi. 9.)

V. *The pleasantness of the way.*—Some forget the end, being beguiled by the journey, like the Reubenites and Gadites. God often makes the way rough for his elect. (*Greg.*)

Epilogue.—Use all circumspection; looking well around, lest the way be lost or we fail in it.

SERMON 618.

THE USE OF TIME.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Redeeming the time.”—*Eph.* v. 16.

Introduction.—To redeem ‘the time’ from purposelessness or vanity is one great sign of heavenly wisdom. ‘The time,’ the present, which is so precious as being—1) Our own; in our power whilst it lasts. 2) Every moment of it avails for growth in holiness, knowledge, and love; for a preparation for eternity. 3) It so very rapidly glides by and passes swiftly beyond our control. This time so precious, brief, and irrevocable, ought to be turned to its best account ere it recedes into a past. Which is—

I. *Imperishable.*—It is not in the power of God Himself to alter or efface that which has once been done. Sin may be pardoned, but the sin itself remains. The past forms one long imperishable record of man’s thoughts, words, and deeds. It never can be wholly blotted out; and the present is even now becoming the past.

II. *Ever remembered.*—God can forget nothing. Hence the future of reward and punishment. Past action escapes the hand, but not the mind of God. This perpetual remembrance should lead to great—1) Thought and care; 2) self-discipline; 3) prayerfulness.

III. *Irreparable.*—Time once spent is spent for ever; badly or well used, it is for ever gone. Other actions require a new time in which they can be performed; another space of time is required in order to redeem a wasted present. And who knows whether this may be granted or not?

Epilogue.—Seize on the present; use it with all—1) Earnestness of purpose; 2) industry in occupation; 3) in expectation of the eternal consequence which flows from our treatment of it for good or for evil.

SERMON 610.

THE INVITATION OF THE LORD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“All things are ready, come unto the marriage.”—*Matt.* xxii. 4.

Introduction.—Let no one impute their final condemnation to God; let no one say, that He did not desire to have me; He did not call me; He hath not prepared a place for me. God would rather have us than the most hungry would have food; the most ambitious, possess honours; the most covetous, riches, etc. God is more anxious about our salvation than we are ourselves; He will willingly exclude no one from heaven. We note—

I. *The testimony of Holy Scripture.*—1) (*Isa.* xliii. 7) Such as will give God no glory in their salvation are as nothing (*Isa.* xl. 17); 2) (*Ezek.* xviii. 23; xxxiii. 11); 3) (1 *Tim.* ii. 4.) There is nothing so acceptable to God, and of such care to Him, as the salvation of the soul, for which purpose He produced and formed us. (*Chrysos.*) God wishes, not compels our salvation; God leaves us with free will. Jesus Christ asks of each one (*John* v. 6); and when we answer (*John.* v. 7), He points to Himself: ‘Behold the Man.’ ‘His doings’ (*Ps.* ix. 11) are those concerning man’s salvation.

II. *Our power to reject the invitation.*—(*John* vi. 44.)—‘Draws’ not forces; His grace is gentle, bland; which allures the freedom of the will and directs it by enticements.

III. *God reckons man’s salvation as His own.*—He became Incarnate, that as man He might persuade when He could not do so as God. Could God do something as man, that as God He could not do? Doubt; yet listen (*Isa.* xlix. 6), is John the Baptist the salvation of God? Is God sick, etc.? Hear the preaching of another John. (*Rev.* vii. 10.) Salvation is again attributed to God. I see an apothecary’s shop is to be opened on Mount Calvary, in which I find every species of plant and poultice from the Title of the Cross, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ God asked after His own image. (*Gen.* iii. 9.) God did at the Incarnation for the salvation of man just what He would have to have done for His own.

IV. *The heavens were opened at the Baptism.*—(*Matt.* iii. 16.)—The gates of heaven are open to all the regenerate. Jesus Christ exclaims (*Luke* xv. 6).

Epilogue.—Salvation and blessing to our God. Adore His love.

SERMON 620.

THE WONDER OF THE LORD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?”—*Matt.* xxii. 12.

Introduction.—This question implies somewhat of wonder and astonishment. Let this garment be love, or righteousness, or faith, or holiness: be it what it may, the Lord expresses surprise that any one should have attempted to enter to this feast without it. The Lord wondered at the boldness of the intruder. For—

I. *He had purchased this garment at a great cost.*—It was the garment that the Bridegroom had furnished for His Bride; it was not made of the hair of slain animals, or of leaves, or of silk; but it was furnished by His open side, from those bowels which revealed His great love to man. ‘The nails penetrating. The nails made an opening for me, that I might see the mind of the Lord. What did I see through the opening? The wound and the nails cry. The love of the heart is revealed through the opening in the body.’ (Bern.) Consider the enormous sacrifice at which the love of Jesus Christ was bought.

II. *This garment was most grateful to Him.*—The Church knows that this garment is most pleasing to the Bridegroom. The seamless tunic (John xix. 23) was a type of it. His body was pierced, but the cruel followers of Pilate refused to rend the coat. Do you endeavour, by hatred and sin, to divide that coat of love, the best garment of Jesus Christ?

II. *This garment is to be worn suddenly.*—The Church had been warned that she should have to wear this garment in a vast assembly, at an uncertain hour. (*Matt.* xxv. 6.) Wherefore (*Matt.* xxiv. 44) it must be prepared by us, who now are bound to weave the wool and flax of the graces of Jesus Christ. (*Prov.* xxxi. 13.)

IV. *The want of this garment will be manifest to the world.*—(*Rev.* xvi. 15.)—But (*Prov.* x. 12). Love and grace cover all those imperfections which will shame the sinner at the Judgment.

V. *Without it, there can be no entrance into heaven.*—The Church knows the need of this garment. So Ahasuerus (*Esther* iv. 2). Sackcloth a type of servitude.

Epilogue.—Give the Lord no cause to wonder at thy fatal folly.

SERMON 621.

THE FATAL CHOICE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“They would not come.”—*Matt.* xxii. 3.

Introduction.—Men are so blind, ‘*Video meliora proboque—Deterior sequor.*’ (Ovid.) ‘They seek things harmful; love things perishable; neglect things saving; hold things eternal for nothing.’ (Euseb. Gal.) ‘As diseased men desire poisons.’ (Hippoc.) Such men, like the beasts, love bedding, rather than gold. (Arist.) So Esau despised his birthright. (Gen. xxv. 33.) The Israelites preferred food to liberty. (Exod. xvi. 3.) We note—

I. *Spiritual blessings hold the first place.*—1) Heaven is created before the earth (Gen. i. 1), to teach us heaven is to be preferred to earth. (Chrysos.) 2) Noah was first blessed, and afterwards he was multiplied. (Gen. ix. 1.) Grace is given first, and increase comes afterwards. (Nic. de Lyra.) Spiritual blessings precede temporal gifts. (Haye.) 3) The Lord taught us to pray for heavenly, then for earthly good. (Matt. vi. 9-16.) 4) The Lord confessed that His true relatives were spiritual. (Matt. xii. 49.) 5) The fish and fowl were blessed; the herbs were not blessed (Gen. i. 12, 22), for they cling to earth. (Aug.)

II. *The reversed order.*—Men make the fatal choice; they reverse God’s order, which implies a diseased—1) Will, which tends to an apparent rather than to a real good. Judas chose thirty pieces of silver; S. Mary Magdalene spent the ointment. Hence Nebuchadnezzar forgot his dream (Dan. ii. 5); it related to things spiritual. Pharaoh remembered his, which concerned temporal matters. (Gen. xli. 17.) 2) Affections. Israelites loved their old Egypt of sin and shame. God’s mercy (Exod. iii. 8); man’s evil affection (Ps. cvi. 24). ‘They despised.’ Sit down (Ps. cxxxvii. 1) by temporal good things of Babylon; affections fixed upon these; stand in gates of Jerusalem. (Ps. cxxii. 2.) 3) Understanding. (Luke xvi. 8.) Wiser towards temporal things than the holy are towards spiritual things.

Epilogue.—Mind is before the body, and eternity is before time, as God is before Satan.

SERMON 622.

THE VOICE OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IV.)

“He saith unto Him, Friend.”—*Matt. xxii. 12.*

Introduction.—That monarch is praised who not only by words invites his subject to the palace, but sends his heralds into every place to summon the guests. Who opens his palace to all, making the entrance thereto so peaceful that no hinderance is opposed to any seeking admittance into it. Solomon provided twelve officers (1 Kings iv. 7); our Lord, His twelve Apostles. His preachers, and heralds are numberless. He opens heaven, beseeches, compels, and gives great gifts to those who come to Him. As the King in the Parable, He pleads and invites. He is ever speaking to four classes of men.

I. *To the ignorant.*—As a kind and gentle instructor; so teaching them that they may stand securely, and adorn themselves with the vestments of grace, and may come in with Him to the eternal supper. (Isa. xlviii. 11.) Teaching righteousness (Matt. v. 20); mercy (Luke vi. 36; Matt. v. 45); patience (Luke xxi. 19); love (John xv. 12), which is the garment of the soul. Of the loving soul. (Rev. xvi. 15.)

II. *To those praying.*—As a sweet consoler (Cant. v. 6) whose voice is only heard in retirement and contemplation (Hosea ii. 14). The Lord spoke to Moses in the desert, but not in Egypt. (Exod. iii. 1.) Saul was anointed when he was away from home. (1 Sam. x. i.) Elijah at Horeb. (1 Kings xix. 8, 9.) S. John the Baptist in the desert. And so with many saints.

III. *To the penitent.*—As a faithful peacemaker. (Eph. ii. 17). God's mercy and our contrition make peace; and when that is made, the Lord speaks to us. (Isa. xxxviii. 1-7.) To S. Mary Magdalene. (Luke vii. 50.)

IV. *To the hardened sinner.*—As a terrible vindicator. (Isa. xlii. 14.) The sinner waxes confident, and then God punishes. God speaks by His preachers, reproving, entreating, threatening; but the sinner is as the deaf. But all will have to hear Him in the Day of Judgment. (Rev. i. 13-17). Candlesticks represent the seven orders of the elect: patriarchs, angels, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins; sword, the sentence of condemnation. (Matt. xxv. 4).

Epilogue.—Listen to this Voice of Jesus Christ, speaking now in love and in mercy.

SERMON 623.

THE BRIDE OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. V.)

"A certain king made a marriage for his son."—*Matt.* xxii. 2.

Introduction.—'God made this marriage between Christ and the Church, which is composed both of Jews and of Gentiles.' (Jerome.) (John iii. 29; Eph. v. 32.) This marriage was contracted and ratified on the Cross; it will be consummated and perfected in the Day of Judgment, when Jesus Christ will lift His Bride, the Church, up from the earth, and will lead Her into the bridal chamber of His heavenly glory. This marriage is stupendous. For—

I. *The Bride was chosen being wholly unworthy.*—Marvellous, that Jesus Christ selected a bride who was not only vile and ignoble, but one who was also defiled and abominable. Rebecca a type. (Gen. xxiv. 65). The veil is the shame of the Church at the first sight of her Lord. (Eph. v. 8; Rom. v. 7, 8).

II. *The Bride was purchased.*—At a most precious price Jesus Christ purchased His bride, even by His own blood. As David did Michal (1 Sam. xviii. 27); as Jacob, Rebecca (Gen. xxiv. 20); as (Hosea iii. 2). He bought the Church, not by servitude or by money, but with blood.

III. *The Bride was propitiated.*—Jesus Christ still endures much from His bride; and He did and suffered all that could be done to propitiate this bride. All wondered at his gracious words. (Heb. xii. 2). The bride was to be gained by love, not by compulsion.

IV. *The Bride was enriched.*—Jesus Christ enriched His bride with all His riches of grace and of glory. (Gen. xxiv. 53). No dowry was deemed too costly to bestow upon her: grace, glory, power, and wisdom.

Epilogue.—Can we bear to break asunder this marriage vow? Shall we consent to be finally divorced from all that is high, holy, and profitable?

SERMON 624.

THE SEVERITY OF DIVINE JUSTICE—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“Bind him hand and foot, and take him away.”—*Matt. xxii. 13.*

Introduction.—The ‘wedding garment’ is charity; and the marriage is representative of—1) the Incarnation; 2) the union of Jesus Christ with His Church; 3) and of His union with a faithful soul. All Christians are brought to this marriage feast; and if their lives and works are found to be without the required love, they will receive, at the Judgment, when Jesus Christ the Judge comes to make the grand inquisition, their final condemnation. The severity of the Divine justice is to be noted in—

I. *Temporal punishment.*—The Jews were punished for their rejection of the Gospel, by the Romans under Titus and Vespasian; (*Matt. xxii. 7*) was literally fulfilled. Fearful retribution for their cruelty to Jesus Christ. So unworthy Christians who refuse to follow in the footsteps of the Cross, are often punished in this present life. God visits them with sorrow and calamity. When the Lord in mercy invited man at His first coming to repentance, He was named ‘Jesus.’ When men will be summoned before Him for punishment, He is spoken of as ‘a certain King.’

II. *Final reproof.*—‘Friend, how camest thou in hither?’ Account is being taken of the present use of means of grace; which account will be examined in the end, when Jesus Christ is joined eternally to His Church. ‘Friend’—1) As bearing God’s image by nature; 2) as having been born anew by baptism. Reproved for presumption; having borne the name of Christian, and yet having put on the clothing of neither love nor holiness; as polluting these nuptials with a spotted garment. O Christian, where is thy gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness.

III. *Eternal condemnation.*—‘The servants’ are the fallen angels who at first suggested the sin, and now are called upon to punish. 1) Bound: no escape; so are sinners bound now by the chain of their sins. 2) Incarcerated: ‘cast into outer darkness;’ ‘interior darkness of soul;’ exterior, eternal night of condemnation. 3) Bitterly afflicted; weeping.

Epilogue.—Prepare a fit and proper garment during life, in which to be arrayed on the morning of the resurrection.

SERMON 625.

THE SELF-CONDEMNATION OF THE LOST.—

(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”—*Matt.* xxii. 13.

Introduction.—If any one fears to descend into hell, he does not fear to do so, for he may be said to descend living (*Ps.* lv. 15); ‘quick into hell,’ in order that he may not descend there when dead. He descends to see and hear what is to be seen and heard there, in order that he may take a timely warning. There is ‘weeping and gnashing of teeth;’ and this is caused for the most part by the envy at the saved, which torments the lost. The guest wanting the wedding garment is a type of a lost soul. 1) No one pleaded for him, neither did he plead for himself. 2) His sinful garment was all the more conspicuous by the contrast with all the bright robes of holiness by which he was surrounded. 3) He, like these bright ones, had been offered a garment, but he was unwilling in due time either to accept it, or to put it on. The other guests are clothed, and he is cast out in his defiled garment; hence his bitter self-condemnation. He remembers that—

I. *Every sin has been repented of.*—Many of those honoured guests were murderers, adulterers, covetuous; every sin has its representation at that banquet. Those sinners are all clothed, whilst he has lost the garment of salvation. Better and holier people than Rahab perished in Jericho (*Judges* vi. 23); but she repented, and made friends of Joshua in time. Rejected guest may not have been the worst man of any of those accepted.

II. *God gives all equal measures of grace.*—No excuse; the wedding garment is offered to us all. God is no respecter of persons as to time, circumstances, or condition of birth. Rejected guest was rejected by his own fault, of his own free will.

III. *The use of our measures of grace is unequal.*—Spring showers develope weeds and flowers alike; under dew the earth is softened, stone unchanged; the sun melts wax and hardens the soil. Love converts a Paul and Magdalene, and hardens a Judas. Evil intention drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea, which saved the Israelites. The condemned will bitterly feel their misuse of grace.

Epilogue.—Ascend from hell before it be too late. Accept, and worthily preserve by sincere repentance, this wedding garment.

SERMON 623.

FRIENDSHIP.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. VIII.*)

“Friend.”—*Matt. xxii. 12.*

Introduction.—There are three kinds of friendship. (1 John iii. 18.; 1) ‘Of word and tongue;’ an expression merely, which may be meaningless. 2) ‘Of truth,’ proceeding from the affections of the heart. 3) ‘In deed,’ that which is most real, and shows itself by works. Our Blessed Lord loved us with all three expressions of friendship. ‘In word’ (Isa. xlviii. 17); ‘in truth,’ with affection (John xv. 13); ‘in deed,’ by His redemption and gifts to us. (James i. 17, 18.) Friend, says Jesus Christ, whom I have loved, taught, redeemed, and enriched, yet who lovest Me only in word. ‘How camest thou hither?’ With what rashness hast thou taken My Name upon thyself? Thou who servest Me in words only. Hence he was speechless. We note that true friendship has four characteristics.

I. *Communication.*—A poor man boasted to Socrates that he was the friend of a rich man. ‘How is that?’ he was asked; ‘since he has left you poor?’ He is no friend who does participate in thy good things. The mutual ministry of the several members of the body illustrates what friendship really is. God enriches all His friends; and they, in their turn, ought to enrich others. (1 Chron. xxix. 14.)

II. *Assimilation.*—Love assimilates the lover with the loved one. The mind transforms that which is loved to its own likeness. A philosopher said, ‘a friend is my own self.’ God’s friends are so assimilated with Himself as to be called God’s. (Psa. lxxxii. 6.) ‘Each one is as he loves. If you love God, you are Godlike; if you love the earth, you are earthly.’ (Aug.)

III. *Likeness of will.*—True friendship both wills and wills not, as the friend does.’ Between friends there is but one will. God’s friends will as He does (Psa. cxii. 1.), and He wills as they do. (Psa. cxlv. 19.) Hence the stability of friendship. (Isa. xlv. 10.)

IV. *Equality.*—The superior has benevolence towards the inferior; the inferior reverences the superior; equality owns an equal friendship. Friendship either receives or makes equals. Without equality there is either subjection or adulation. Jesus Christ became our brother that God might become our friend. (John xv. 15.)

Epilogue.—Pray to maintain this holy friendship with God.

SERMON 627.

THE CALLS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“And sent forth His servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding.”—*Matt.* xxii. 3.

Introduction.—We fancy that if a servant of God were to come to us direct from heaven, calling us to grace and glory; to these nuptials; that we should immediately obey His call. Meanwhile God sends not one but many servants to us directly from Himself; yet we know not, and listen to them not. God calls us—

I. *By Holy Scripture.*—‘Holy Scripture is a letter of God to his creature.’ (Greg.) ‘When we pray, we speak to God; but when we read, God speaks to us.’ (Aug.) Holy Scripture shows us—1) The will of God. 2) Our own sins and failings. 3) The means of overcoming sin. 4) The path of progressive holiness. S. Antony was converted by reading. (*Matt.* xix. 21.) S. Augustine, by hearing the words, ‘take up and read;’ and he read. (*Rom.* xiii. 13.) S. Simon Stylites, by the words. (*Matt.* v. 3, 4.) A headstrong young sensualist gave up his sins on hearing (*Isa.* xiv. 11) read to him.

II. *By superiors, preachers, and parents.*—These resemble the cloud which went before the Israelites in the wilderness. God assumed the voice of Eli to lead Samuel to reverence his superior. (1 *Sam.* iii. 5.) Superiors can guide their subordinates. Preachers are bound to—1) Warn; 2) exhort; 3) persuade, to stir up the affections and warm the heart.

III. *By good example.*—As a kindled coal ignites others, so is a good and holy life infectious. Our Blessed Lord, by His holiness, love, and patience warned to repentance the heart of the penitent thief. To this were the Philipians exhorted. (*Phil.* ii. 15.) So were husbands and wives. (1 *Cor.* vii. 16.) In the Church rather than the synagogue, are the words fulfilled. (*Zech.* viii. 23.)

IV. *By providence.*—1) By benefits. (*Hosea* xi. 4.) Adam’s ‘cords’ were daily food, honour, power, health; all blessings both spiritual and temporal. So David drawn. (1 *Sam.* xii. 7, 8.) 2) By adversities. God draws sinners, as Absalom drew Joab. (2 *Sam.* xiv. 29-33.) So. (*Hosea* ii. 7, 8.)

V. *By internal leadings.*—1) By remorse of conscience. 2) By internal inspirations.

Epilogue.—Let, O! let not God’s voice call to thee in vain.

SERMON 628.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“The kingdom of heaven . . . few are chosen.”—*Matt.* xxii. 2-15.

Introduction.—‘Dinner’ belongs to an earlier part of the day than ‘supper.’ Dinner represents the good gifts of grace which are given to the Church Militant; ‘supper’ signifies those graces bestowed upon the Church Triumphant. Every sermon offers a feast, more or less rich, upon the things of God. We learn from this Gospel—

I. *Concerning God.*—1) His power: He made so magnificent a banquet to which He called all the nations of men. This was a far greater banquet than that of Ahasuerus. 2) His wisdom: amongst so many guests He found out at once the one with an improper garment. 3) His goodness: despising no nation, and calling all men alike. 4) His equality: He does not punish this guest until he has proved that he fully deserved punishment. So before Sodom was destroyed. (*Gen.* xviii. 21.)

II. *Concerning all that are in authority.*—1) Not too hastily to punish wrongdoers. First to examine, like this king did. ‘The day reveals the truth, and a sentence not executed can be recalled.’ 2) To Judge calmly: ‘Friend;’ no excitement; the mind being free from all anger or irritation. 3) To maintain a proper dignity: the man is spoken of as a ‘king.’

III. *To attend to the Divine call.*—Remembering—1) Who calls us: our Creator, Redeemer, Master, and Judge. 2) Who we are who are called: how exceedingly miserable and undone. 4) To what we are called: to the heavenly marriage feast, to a spiritual refection. 5) How we are called; not once or twice but many times, by Providences, books, sermons, internal inspirations, etc. 6) The punishment that awaits us if we do not obey the call. (*Phil.* iii. 18.)

IV. *To come to the Eucharistic Communion.*—Clad in the garment of love or of grace, that we may show respect and honour to our Superior. The Jews ate not the Passover with defiled hands; and we ought not willingly to eat the Christian Passover with contaminated souls.

SERMON 629.

THE SPIRITUAL COMBAT.—*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities.”—

Eph. vi. 12.

Introduction.—This spiritual conflict is so very dangerous, because it is often waged against us when we are wholly unconscious of the attack. It began (Gen. iii. 15); hence the permission (Job i. 12). The tempter (Matt. iv. 3) was, according to S. Augustine, in a human form. To the Saints, Satan often takes the form of some creature. Alas! how many fall in this combat, from the following mistakes in their warfare.

I. *They load themselves with heavy and unaccustomed armour.*—Not so David (1 Sam. xvii. 39); excessive and unusual prayer, fasting, and meditation, render us incapable of using these weapons against Satan. The spiritual weapons must ever be adapted to our spiritual strength. As in all other things so in warfare, there must be a correspondence between the means and ends.

II. *They do not arm themselves before the fight.*—When they feel the pain of their wounds they rush to their arms; wounded by the poison of the tongue, they seek the shield of patience and humility. We ought to be ever armed, remembering (1 Pet. v. 8). Our true preparation is forethought, self-examination, and prayer.

III. *They do not fight in the best place.*—The enemy is to be resisted in a narrow place, where the few can withstand the many. The doors of the citadel of the soul must be closed to our spiritual enemies, who will gain the day if fought with within the soul.

IV. *They despise the strength of their adversary.*—So they are led to cast away their arms when they need them most, and are unwilling to arm their weakest parts. Almsgiving is the special armour of the covetous; purity of the sensual.

V. *They fight with like weapons.*—Such oppose sin to sin; hatred to hatred; slander to slander; foolishness to foolishness; instead of the opposites: as water to fire, love to hate. (Prov. xxv. 21, 22.)

Epilogue.—Caution as well as courage is needed in this conflict.

SERMON 630.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”—*Eph.* vi. 11.

Introduction.—Jesus Christ came into this world as a King, to liberate His people from captivity and death. The devil had taken Adam captive, so Jesus Christ came to deliver him. The devil had erected the gates of ignorance, error, and falsehood, and had given to each one an idol instead of God; all of which Jesus Christ came in order to break down, albeit He was wounded in the fight in His hands and His feet, and in His side. (Luke xi. 21, 22.) Jesus Christ, the ‘stronger’ and more ‘heavily armed,’ with zeal and love, ‘divideth the spoil’ from sin, death, and hell. Three particulars especially concern the combatant.

I. *The place in which he stands.*—Between heaven and earth. Against the former no arms are needed (Isa. xxxii. 18), but only against the latter; the dwellers in which are hardened sinners, but are to be subdued and led captive by the armed ones of God. Even with freedom of the will, still they are bound (Isa. xxiv. 22); just as tares are tied up in bundles to be burned. The larger is the number in hell, the greater will be the burning. Fight armed whilst the battle-plain is yet before thee, for if the battle be once lost, the position in which you stood can never be regained.

II. *The enemies he has to encounter.*—Not men but demons (Eph. vi. 12); not against weak men, but against our superiors in might and cunning; against the ‘rulers of the darkness,’ the leaders and emissaries of Satan ‘in high places;’ so gaining an advantage over us they fight us, being themselves invisible from above. We need all our arms to defend us against such foes.

III. *The reward we may expect.*—The heavenly crown. (1 Cor. ix. 25.) As the Roman generals were crowned at home after a great victory, so are the Saints crowned in heaven by angels, as being the victorious soldiers of Jesus Christ. (2 Tim. ii. 3-5.)

Epilogue.—Our danger, and the issue of our struggle, alike urge us to use every means of defence.

SERMON 631.

PRAYER THE LIFE OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Sir, come down ere my child die.”—*John* iv. 49.

Introduction.—‘He truly knows how to live who rightly knows how to pray.’ From the words, ‘thy son liveth,’ it is rightly assumed that he had already died, and that he was restored to life by prayer. Prayer is truly the life of the soul. For—

I. *It preserves us from temptation.*—The disciples were tempted to forsake their Lord, because they slept rather than prayed: he enters into temptation, who does not enter into prayer. The disciples slept in Gethsemane. (*Matt.* xxvi. 41.) Adam slept, and fell whilst in Paradise; Abel prayed, and was saved when driven out of it. David slept, and fell in holy Jerusalem (2 *Sam.* xi. 2); Daniel prayed, and was preserved in heathen Babylon. (*Daniel* vi. 10.) Prayer is the life of the soul. ‘Truly he knows how to live, who rightly knows how to pray.’

II. *It is a fountain of the ‘water of life.’*—Rebekah is a holy soul, who gave Eliezer the water at once (*Gen.* xxiv. 17-20); Samaritan woman an evil soul, who refused Jesus Christ. (*John* iv. 9.) Rebekah gained blessings, riches, and a husband; the Samaritan only a reproof. (*John* iv. 10.) The ‘gift of God’ is prayer, which procures both grace and mercy; ‘if thou knewest,’ ‘if thou hadst previously asked for.’ Knowledge comes from prayer. Prayer would have procured the living water. ‘Truly he knows how to live,’ etc.

III. *It is the means of procuring all blessings.*—The blessing must be sought for, if wished for. Our Lord worked miracles when prayed to. Water, wine, leprous, blind, deliverance from storm. ‘Lord save us.’ Pharisee asked for nothing, and gained nothing in the temple; the Publican prayed for and obtained pardon. The strength and power of prayer is expressed in Jacob wrestling with the Angel (*Gen.* xxxii. 26), by which prayer he was supported on meeting his brother Esau. Prayer saved Daniel from death in Babylon. ‘Truly he knows how to live,’ etc.

IV. *It unites us with God.*—He goes away from God who does not join himself to God in prayer, by which we have life, and have it more abundantly. Cry out in every spiritual need, ‘Come down, O Lord, ere my soul die,’ with David. (*Ps.* xiii. 3, 4.) Satan, death, and hell are powerless against prayer.

Epilogue.—Live and not die; pray and live. ‘Truly he knows how to live,’ etc.

SERMON 632.

THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”—*John* iv. 45.

Introduction.—This reproof of the nobleman who had seen no sign is a warning to us who can look back upon signs and wonders infinite; who possess to the full what others in vain had longed for (*Matt.* xii. 38-44); who know how the Gospel spread in forty years, and how after the conversion of Constantine almost the whole world became Christian. These signs and wonders were—

I. *The overthrow of Idolatry.*—Idolatry was defended by princes and philosophers, and it was deeply rooted in men's minds. Oracles, sacrifices, rites, formed the very life of the people. Jesus Christ was the stone of (*Luke* xx. 18); Christianity undergoing twelve great conflicts, and socially every kind of persecution.

II. *The wonderful preaching of a few Apostles.*—The first Apostles and disciples were poor, ill-born, sent by no kings or great men; they used no flattery; they were not backed up by force of arms: they had no adventitious helps of any kind.

III. *The difficulty of their doctrine.*—The Trinity, the Incarnation, Sacramental grace, and a hard and austere life—a daily cross—were all truths as new as they were strange.

IV. *The constancy of the Faithful.*—The ‘noble army of martyrs:’ Polycarp, Ignatius, S. Agnes, S. Laurence. (*Tertull. ad Scap.*) The blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church. The martyrology is one continuous record of miracles of God's grace.

V. *The change in the morals and manners.*—The religion of Jesus Christ introduced a new code of life and morals into the world. Gospel answered (*Jer.* xiii. 23). S. Peter's vision (*Acts* x. 9-16) in the house of Simon of Joppa. God's cleansing a type of the Gospel in the world.

Epilogue.—A twofold miracle in our own day—1) That any should fall away from a faith which has wrought so great things; 2) that any Christians should dare to belie their faith by their graceless sinful lives.

SERMON 633.

THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Himself believed and his whole house.”—*John* iv. 53.

Introduction.—God ordained, in His marvellous economy of the world, that the superior should ever govern the inferior; as the large motive-wheel regulates the rest of the machinery. In the moral world the lowly are guided by the mighty: ‘Componitur orbis—Regis ad exemplum.’ (Claud.) Alexander endured thirst to instruct his soldiers to bear it. Agesilaus began any quick operation himself. Rudolph refused a vessel of water, saying, ‘I thirst for my army, not for myself.’ Silius taught by action rather than by word. The Lacedemonians recited to their youth the glorious deeds of their ancestors. The superior holds up the mirror of action to the inferior; the parent to the child. ‘As is the king, such is society; as is the heir such is the servant.’ The example of the ruler was followed by all his house. Solon compared rulers to the body, subjects to its shadow, since the shadow represents the body. We note—

I. *Example in deed.*—‘Examples move rather than words.’ (Arist.) ‘The testimony of the life is more efficacious than that of the tongue.’ (Cypr.) Adam followed Eve’s disobedience. (Gen. iii. 6.) Lot went into Zoar; his wife lost his guiding example, and turned round. (Gen. xix. 26.) Mary’s service suggested by Martha’s ‘then’ [Greek ‘therefore’]. (John xii. 3.) (Tolet.) David’s sin was pardoned, but the child was to die, lest his evil example should spread. (2 Sam. xii. 14.) (Theod.) Herod’s fear (Matt. ii. 3), given to those who, but for him, would have rejoiced at the Saviour’s birth. (Diony. Cart.) Power of noble actions.

II. *Example in word.*—Moses began his song ere the whole Israelites were in safety (Exod. xv. 1), who, although they feared and trembled, hearing Moses sing, they followed his example. So with shouts ‘Jehu is king.’ (2 Kings ix. 13.) ‘Hosannah.’ (Matt. xxi. 9.) Those who followed took up the cry of those before. Power of orators and writers.

III. *Example in thought.*—(Ps. xiv. 1.)—‘The fool;’ contagious example. They are corrupt. Wicked thoughts quickly propagated. (Did. de Cel.)

Epilogue.—Use all example for warning or for imitation.

SERMON 634.

THE FOUR LIVES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Thy son liveth.”—*John* vi. 51.

Introduction.—Grace is to the soul what health is to the body; the best of all God’s gifts; it makes man both a companion of angels and a brother of Jesus Christ and His disciples. (*Matt.* xii. 50.) For grace is life. The Holy Gospel brings before us to-day a fourfold life.

I. *The life of nature.*—(*Gen.* ii. 7.)—This is very short. (*Job* xiv. 1, 2; *James* iv. 14.) And it is often shortened before its natural time. Korah, etc. (*Numb.* xvi. 32.) The Cities of the Plain. (*Gen.* xix. 28.) For the parent’s sin. (2 *Sam.* xii. 18.) This life was lost in Adam, but regained in Jesus Christ.

II. *The life of sin.*—(*Rom.* viii. 13; *Rev.* iii. 1.)—This life often takes its being from a life of pleasure. (*Jer.* ix. 21); the ‘windows’ are the eyes; ‘the lust of the eyes.’ (*Eph.* v. 18.) This life binds the soul after death to an eternal death, or to a life of endless punishment.

III. *The life of grace.*—True of Holy Ghost. (*Job* x. 12.) This life is led when deadly sin is conquered. Original sin is washed away in baptism, and the life of grace is given in its stead. (*John* xi. 26; *Rom.* vi. 23.) Jesus Christ is the ‘he-goat’ of (*Dan.* viii. 5.) He overcomes the ram, or Satan.

IV. *The life of eternal glory.*—(*John* xvii. 3.)—A fixed and everlasting life, as opposed to the fleeting and unstable life of this world. To be gained—1) By good works. (*Rom.* ii. 7.) 2) By patience. (2 *Cor.* iv. 17.) 3) By righteousness (*James* i. 12), or holiness.

Epilogue.—The first two lives are to be resolved into the two last; grace overcomes nature, as glory triumphs over sin.

SERMON 635.

PARENTAL CARE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.

“Sir, come down ere my child die.”—*John* iv. 49.

Introduction.—The Capernaum nobleman was most anxious about his son; so he sends no servant, but himself goes to Jesus Christ, and entreats Him earnestly on behalf of his son, for he was afraid of any delay. This conduct teaches us that care is to be exercised in three respects, in relation to our children.

I. *To their natural life.*—Children are to be tended and nursed carefully; the seeds of disease are often sown in childhood. A sound body makes a sound mind; an active body an active noble career in the world. All animals care for their young.

II. *To their moral, and intellectual, and civil life.*—Instruction, discipline, manners, and knowledge, are all to be cultivated. That the mind may grow as well as the body; the mind must be fed and tended as the body is. Parents are bound to train their children, by—1) Example; 2) Instruction; 3) The development of every faculty.

III. *To their spiritual life.*—It is sad to neglect the highest and best life of all. The spiritual life languishes in the young without—1) Prayer; 2) Meditation, correction, instruction in righteousness, and 3) a holy example of respect to, and reverence for, divine things. As the parent sows, so must he reap. He is training up heirs, either for God or Satan; for heaven or hell.

Epilogue.—The Lord rewarded the nobleman's parental care; his faith and love gained him his petition. Jesus Christ taught us how to exalt and to hallow every relationship of life.

SERMON 636.THE PARABLE OF ACTION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“Go thy way ; thy son liveth.”—*John* iv. 50.

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord never said or did anything being moved either by caprice, or by unkindness, or by ostentation. There was a purpose in all that he said and did. He never contradicted himself ; never acted at one time in one way, at another time in another way. He offered to come to the house of the Centurion. ‘I will come’ (*Matt.* viii. 7). He did enter the house of Jairus, and raised his daughter. (*Luke* viii. 51.) He would not enter the nobleman’s house, to teach by His action that He was—

I. *No respecter of persons.*—The nobleman was the highest of all three applicants. So with Elisha and Naaman. (*2 Kings* v. 10.) A comment, S. Peter’s speech to Cornelius. (*Acts* x. 34, 35.) As well may we judge of a horse by his saddle and bridle, as a man by his rank, money, or clothes. External advantages are—1) Fortuitous ; 2) extrinsic ; 3) temporal.

II. *Everywhere present.*—He could heal afar off as well as nigh. Presence and power of Jesus Christ is everywhere. He knows and sees us all our lives long. He is nigh to us ; being specially present in—1) His Sacraments ; 2) His Churches ; 3) the hearts of the faithful.

III. *Doing what was best, rather than what was wished.*—God often hears us for our own good, and not after our own desires. Satan was allowed to tempt Job. (*Job.* i. 1.) S. Paul prayed against his thorn in the flesh, but unsuccessfully. (*2 Cor.* xi. 8, 9.) God works His own will in His own way. 1) Right ; 2) wisely ; 3) mercifully.

Epilogue.—We are taught by the conduct of this nobleman humility, watchfulness, and submission to God’s will.

SERMON 637.

THE DEATH OF THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“Come down ere my child die.”—*John* iv. 49.

Introduction.—The fiery serpent was a most severe punishment to the Israelites in the wilderness. The remedy mercifully provided was a wonderful one, as being prophetic. (Num. xxi. 8.) Sins are represented by these poisonous bites. What is our remedy against so dire a disease? Let us place sin itself upon the pole, and he who has once steadily beheld it, and seen that its effects are more poisonous than even the bite of any reptile, will try to render himself proof against its power. The serpent, being looked upon, healed the bite. Sin, when it is seen, must hinder many from sinning. Let those who in their souls are like the nobleman's son, at the point of death in the body, look upon sin, see its deformity, and seek for healing. Note that—

I. *The soul has a natural and a supernatural life.*—The soul has a life by its own nature, sensation, and reason, the basis of its own growth. This is a physical life. It has also a supernatural life of grace. The adjective ‘living’ (Gen. iii. 7) expresses this life of grace. Could we choose in what form we might come into this world, would it be as an ant or as a seraphim? The higher life is infinitely the more glorious. Sin takes this life away; hence it is called ‘deadly.’ It destroys that life of which the Apostle. (Gal. ii. 20.) Let us loathe sin as if it were a dead body; as a fiery monster, who can with a breath destroy all whom he approaches.

II. *Grace gives the right to eternal blessedness.*—Grace quickens the soul for an immortality of glory; it ennobles it; and eternal happiness is the reward of righteousness. (2 Tim. iv. 8.) The promise is of mercy; the performance is of justice. That grace which leads to heaven is the living spirit which animated Ezekiel's wheels. (Ezek. i. 15-22.)

III. *Sin destroys this right.*—1) It kills the supernatural life. 2) It takes the soul out of the chariot of God. 3) It destroys the cells of the soul, so that the bee of divine grace can deposit no honey in it.

Epilogue.—O sinner, do you make light of such a cruel death of the soul? A death more cruel than any bodily death: inasmuch as the soul is more noble than the body. Where is your mind? What sense have you? Ah, do you desire to live again? Who doubts? The kind hand, and the marvellous love of Jesus Christ will be not wanting. Come, repent; bring a contrite heart to the tribunal of Jesus Christ, Who will say ‘My son, thy soul liveth, and liveth for ever.’

SERMON 638.

THE WEAK CHRISTIAN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe.”—*John* iv. 43.

Introduction.—Knowing our own weakness and infirmities, the nobleman of this Gospel is a most encouraging example to us. He was weak in spiritual things, and yet he gained all that was to be desired; health for his dying son, and a full and perfect belief for himself and all his household. He was weak—

I. *In faith.*—His ‘shield of faith’ (*Eph.* vi. 16) was a very small one, it did not cover his left eye of natural wisdom so that his right eye of grace might clearly see. His weakness was seen, inasmuch as—1) He desired signs and wonders ere he could believe. The Sycharians (*John* iv. 40, 41), Gentiles as they were, put him who was a Jew to shame, by their ready faith. This nobleman had too often seen and heard of our Blessed Lord, when he was at Capernaum. A warning to us who—*a*) fail to recognize the great miracles of our daily grace, preservation, and being; like the Jews (*Matt.* xii. 38-41); *b*) who seek to detract from and to lessen God’s wonders. 2) He desired the Presence of Jesus Christ, a contrast, in this respect, with the centurion. (*Matt.* viii. 8.) He forgot that God is all hands, all eyes, all feet, that He is everywhere present in power and energy. We forget this, doing or thinking in secret that which we could not do or say openly.

II. *In hope.*—‘His helmet’ was too small (*1 Thess.* v. 8) for him. As the helmet guards the head, so does the hope of salvation the springs of action. He wanted Jesus Christ to come to him directly; his hope was limited to this side of the grave. A contrast with Abraham. (*Heb.* xi. 19; *Gen.* xxii. 5.) How ‘come again,’ if slain? Abraham hoped for the resurrection of Isaac, and the fulfilment of the promise; hence already he ‘received him a figure.’ We show our want of hope when we—1) Despair of the conversion of any sinner; 2) we abandon ourselves to utter helplessness, if God does not immediately deliver us from trouble.

III. *In love.*—His ‘breastplate of love’ was small. (*1 Thess.* v. 8.) This defends the soul. 1) He did not come to Jesus Christ till he was in sore need. 2) He cared more for his son’s body than for his soul.

Epilogue.—Having turned to Jesus Christ all weakness was removed from the nobleman; he increased in hope and charity as well as faith; his boyhood of grace was passed away. (*1 Cor.* xiii. 11.)

SERMON 639.

THE WONDERFUL CURE.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. IX.*)

“Thy son liveth.”—*John iv. 50.*

Introduction.—In this Gospel we note the occasion of infirmity which is to be avoided; the condition of it which is to be guarded against; and the cure of it which is to be sought for. We will confine our thoughts to the last consideration. Concerning which we consider—

I. *A preparative diligence.*—(*Amos. iv. 12.*)—To do this; three affections are pointed out in this Gospel as being necessary. 1) Of hope. The nobleman hoped to obtain a cure for his son, so the sinner draws nigh unto Jesus, hoping to obtain pardon and peace, trusting in His promise. (*John vi. 37.*) 2) Of fear: the nobleman feared that his son would die before the Lord came: ‘Come down,’ etc. So the sinner ought to fear, lest he be seized upon by death, ere the Lord has ‘come down’ into his soul by Divine grace, for he is already dead through sin, and hell is opening her jaws upon him. (*Ps. cvii. 18.*) Of intercession: ‘besought Him.’ Prayer must flow from a firm faith; so the Lord convicted the nobleman of his imperfect faith, saying: ‘Except ye see,’ etc., for the nobleman did not believe that Jesus Christ could heal save by his bodily presence. Faith and prayer go hand in hand. (*James i. 6.*)

II. *An operative efficacy.*—This was seen in Jesus Christ, Who by a word alone, being absent, cured the young man, who from the gates of death was perfectly restored to health. Jesus Christ went not to the nobleman’s, but offered to go to the centurion’s abode; showing Himself to be no respecter of persons. Obedience was the result of a faith as yet imperfect, but which halted not at the Lord’s command. The news came as the nobleman was ‘going down.’ Whilst we are walking in the way of the Lord’s commandments, we gain a succession of healings and triumphs over sin.

III. *A thanksgiving benevolence.*—The sinner recovered from the fever of sin and cured, ought to return thanks to God. (*Ps. ciii. 1-5.*) The recognition of the benefit ended in the belief of the nobleman and of his whole house. All creation teaches us thankfulness. Like the elephant, who being helped out of a dyke followed his deliverer.

Epilogue.—Spiritual death is a far severer danger than that of mere bodily death; and where the greater danger is, there must be an exercise of a greater care. As we avoid the danger of infection from bodily disease, so ought we to be the more careful to avoid contracting the infection from sinners of spiritual death.

SERMON 640.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel,*
Ser. X.)

“And there was a certain nobleman into Galilee.”—*John* iv. 46-54.

Introduction.—In all progress the eye and the foot are most needful; so in spiritual progress we need the eye of faith and the foot of good works. This nobleman had both the eye and the foot. The man believed, and also ‘he went his way,’ doing what the Lord commanded. Would that we could say with Job. (*Job* xxix. 15.) The Gospel both points out and urges us onward along the path of salvation. We note in this Gospel, that—

I. *Death spares no one.*—It comes equally to king and subject, peer and peasant, to rich and poor; no human power, no prayers, can overcome it. ‘Ashes equal all;’ we are born unlike, but we die alike. When in triumph the younger Constantine entered Rome, and saw kings there almost as numerous as citizens, the magnificent buildings, etc., and was asked what he thought of it all, he replied, ‘I have been taught that men die at Rome as elsewhere.’ No one builds in a city about to fall into ruins. Why build we so much in the city of this world?

II. *Trouble is a weapon of use in God's hands.*—It drew the nobleman to Jesus Christ, who was often at Capernaum, and yet unsought for by him. In prosperity we forget that God to Whom we have prayed in our adversity. (*Hosea* v. 15; vi. 1.)

III. *Not to require prodigies.*—Not to wait for miracles in coming to God. Many are seeking for outward signs, instead of following the inward guiding. God invited the Jews by His loving providence, but they wanted signs and wonders, ere they would accept Him. (*Ezek.* xxxiii. 32.) So the Ionians, who wished for peace with Cyrus. (*Herod* I. c. 141.) The prudent follow Rahab, and make friends before the signs and wonders are wrought.

IV. *To take great care of children.*—The nobleman—1) came himself; 2) took a long journey; 3) and prayed earnestly for his son. We are to care for our children, for—1) their natural life; 2) their moral and intellectual life; 3) for their spiritual life. A personal reward flowed from parental care.

V. *To increase in faith and the other graces.*—The nobleman thought of Jesus Christ—1) as a holy man, and a great prophet; 2) as a true prophet: ‘Go thy way,’ thinking that his son is healed by some other means; 3) as God Himself, finding that our Lord's will, and power, and knowledge were all equal. We ought to increase. (*Eph.* iv. 13, 15; *Isa.* lxi. 9.)

SERMON 641.

CONFIDENCE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Being confident . . . that He Which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”—*Pb l. i. 6.*

Introduction.—This confidence condemns—1) self trust; the ‘He’ is God; hence he said (2 Cor. iii. 5), and the prophet (Jer. xvii. 5, 7). His confidence was in God, and not in man. 2) Those who were over-timid and despairing; those who prophesy a bad end to a good beginning. Not so the Apostle. (Heb. vi. 9; Gal. v. 10.) 3) Those who presumed on their perseverance, by his perpetual prayer for them. In all true humility, there is to be found some ground for confidence and perseverance. From—

I. *The nobility of God’s nature.*—It is the law of a noble nature never to confer half a benefit; never to leave a work undone. What the grace of God is pleased to begin, it accords with His nobility to continue, and carry on unto perfection. It is so in all His works of nature. We reckon that God will not give us the half of a gift only.

II. *The glory of God’s counsels.*—It is a disgrace to an artificer to begin a work, and not to be able to finish it. (Luke xiv. 30.) Hence Moses’s argument. (Num. xiv. 16.) For His own glory, God will consummate many things which man does not deserve (Ps. lxxix. 9), to arrive at their fruition.

III. *The answer to our prayers.*—The Apostle felt this confidence, since in all his prayers the Philippians came into his mind. His soul testified to God’s purpose towards them. So we in prayer and self-examination can have (1 Peter iii. 21), which corrects undue—1) despondency; 2) abjectness.

IV. *The manner of the use of grace.*—If we be faithful in our use of small things, true for us. (Matt. xxv. 21.) This present life is our day of small things in every detail.

Epilogue.—May this well-grounded confidence be ours for our own—1) hope; 2) help; and 3) comfort. (Heb. x. 35.)

SERMON 642.

THE NEED OF GRACE.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

"He Which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—*Phil.* i. 6.

Introduction.—There are three points of especial note in this verse. The 'begun' 'a good work;' 'until the day of Jesus Christ.' All of which teach us how great is the need of divine grace, in order to begin, to continue, and to perfect, every good work.

I. *To begin a good work is certainly of grace.*—No one can cast off sin, save by divine grace; a 'new creature' is required, and none but God can create; God alone creates the soul. (*Ezek.* xviii. 4.) The elements used in this new creation are—1) Grace, which is the root of all virtue, and an infusion of the Creator. 2) Faith and works. (*James* ii. 26.) 3) Charity, which sin at one time drove out of soul. 4) Providence, justice, temperance, and fortitude; the four moral virtues, to which is added the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Of these (*Hosea* iii. 2), for (*1 Cor.* xv. 10).

II. *To continue, is truly of the grace of God.*—Placed without, in the pit of sin, by grace alone is the right path persevered in. Some things in nature retain the form in which they are cast; others, like images in a mirror, change, and are momentarily changing. Through the action of fire and water permanent forms are obtained; castings and crystallizations. So, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, which fire and water represent, are formed heavenly natures. Not turn back to creature; but press forward towards God. (*Luke* xvii. 32; ix. 62.) The fallow ground of the sinful soul is to be broken up by the ploughshare of repentance.

III. *To perfect, is singularly the gift of God.*—(*Rom.* vii. 18; *Luke* xi. 12.)—Egg signifies perseverance. 1) Its whiteness: purity of life. 2) Its fullness: diligence. 3) Its roundness: that the service of God is endless. 4) Its medicinal properties: white for wounds, and yelk for nourishment, is perseverance, the best remedy against sin. 5) Its fecundity: forming a chicken by continuous sitting, perseverance. (*Matt.* x. 22.) The scorpion goes with depressed head, having a sting in its tail; a type of the inconstant; of which (*Ezek.* ii. 6).

Epilogue.—Follow the leadings of grace in the good land. (*Psa.* cxliii. 6.)

SERMON 643.

OUR GREAT CREDITOR.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened,” etc.—*Matt.* xviii. 23, 24.

Introduction.—‘Kingdom of heaven,’ is the Church Militant. ‘A certain King,’ is Jesus Christ, both God and man, and King of kings. The ‘account’ is now made through the conscience, enlightened by Holy Scripture. ‘Ten thousand talents’ are the ten commandments, which are broken a thousandfold. Our gratitude and love are rekindled by the thought of the debts which we owe to God. God is our great creditor, on account—

I. *Of original sin.*—(*Eph.* ii. 3.)—A fearful and heavy load. We can neither increase it nor remove it. Jesus Christ came to bear it for us. He removed it from us in Holy Baptism, and from our account with God, on the Cross.

II. *Of actual sin.*—(*Isa.* lix. 2.)—This needs the daily, hourly, application of washing by His most precious Blood.

III. *Of obedience, by natural and divine law.*—(*Rom.* ii. 14, 15.)—1) Natural: God is our Creator. (*Acts* xvii. 28.) Jesus Christ is our Redeemer. 2) Divine: He is our King. (*Rom.* xiii. 1.) We are His spiritual subjects and followers.

IV. *Of gratitude for all blessings.*—Temporal and spiritual. (*1 Cor.* xii. 6-11.) All His blessings, whether of nature or of grace, flow from Him, and demand—1) Our gratitude; 2) our desire to make some return.

V. *Of earnest love for any good which we may have done.*—To Him be all the praise and honour. (*Ps.* cxv. i.) ‘Not unto us.’ Remember all of goodness that we either are or do flows entirely from Him.

Epilogue.—Two lessons are contained in thus thinking of God. 1) Of humble, loving thankfulness to our Great Creator, Who is so merciful to us. 2) Of infinite mercy and compassion to our fellow-sinners: since their debt to us cannot be anything of like amount of ours to God. We are bound to forgive a little when so very much is forgiven to ourselves.

SERMON 644.

FORGIVENESS.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. II.*)

“Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee.”—*Matt. xviii. 33.*

Introduction.—It is not a question which admits of long deliberation, whether or not we ought to forgive an enemy; the decree proclaimed by the Lord our Judge is irrefragable. We must forgive; it is both right and expedient for us so to do: nay, it is altogether necessary. Jesus Christ has shut us up in a circle, as Pyrrhus did the Roman ambassador, whence He will not let us escape, unless we promise peace and forgiveness. No plea of hardship or of impossibility will avail us. We are led to exercise forgiveness—

I. *By the example of the heathen.*—S. Chrysostom contrasts their fulfilment of this great law of nature with our disobedience to the law of grace. S. Basil the Great instances the case of Pericles, who, taunted with reproaches for a whole day in the market-place, paid little heed to the matter; of Euclides, who told a person threatening his life, that he should meet death patiently, and sought to be reconciled to him; of Socrates, who said of a blow on the cheek, that it was written on a proper front.

II. *By the fear of offending angels and their King.*—Our Good and our Guardian Angel, Who watches over us from the cradle to the grave; the King of angels, Who said (*Matt. v. 44.*)

III. *By following the example of Jesus Christ.*—That ought to be enough for us, which was sufficient for the Pythagoreans: ‘He said it,’ consecrated every word of their master. The command of the Word Incarnate ought to carry obedience with it. Is not the word of Jesus Christ stronger than Absalom’s (2 Sam. xiii. 28, 29); than a vision (Gen. xxxi. 29), though Laban was an idolater.

IV. *So to gain the love and favour of Jesus Christ.*—Pilate and Herod were made friends to betray Jesus Christ, Will you forgive your enemy, to gain and to find Him? Is not the loving Jesus Christ more dear to you than the devil?

Epilogue.—See that you obey the commands of Jesus Christ, and ever pray for a spirit of peace and forgiveness.

SERMON 645.

THE DANGER OF PARDONED SIN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“His Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors.”—*Matt.* xviii. 34.

Introduction.—‘Be not without fear of sin forgiven.’ (*Ecclus.* v. 5.) The servant was pardoned first and condemned afterwards. Forgiven and then feared? Yes; lest the forgiven sin leads thee afterwards to eternal damnation. Can sin forgiven again rise up against us? By no means; the fear is not whether forgiven sin can be unpardoned again, and a second time be imputed to the sinner, but the fear is—1) that the second sin may be aggravated by the former offence; as a previous conviction increases the Judge’s sentence. 2) That although forgiven it still entails a serious loss of God’s gifts and graces; the soul being like the body recovered from illness, rendered very liable to fall away again. Although forgiven sin is not imputed, we note that—

I. *Pardoned sin leads to cumulative punishment.*—The debt signifies the punishment which is due to sin, and which was remitted by the agencies of prayer and repentance. Subsequent ingratitude brings back not the old sin, but the punishment collectively of the old and new sin: the punishment returns in consequence of present acts, to strengthen the penalty of the fresh transgression.

II. *Pardoned sin implies a loss.*—A loss of grace and favour ever follows sin. God permitted the forgiven one to fall into the sin of ingratitude and cruelty. The extreme punishment may be remitted, yet the love, favour, and counsel of God are well nigh withdrawn.

III. *Pardoned sin leaves a weakness.*—Just as illness does in the body. Many indirect and sad effects follow from sin that has been especially forgiven. Old habits, thoughts, associations, and disgraces cling to the conscience like pitch.

IV. *Pardoned sin carries with it an indirect punishment.*—A permissive or negative punishment; as if a pardoned child, from very shame, fleeing from his father’s house, should fall into some great hurt or calamity.

Epilogue.—Between hope and fear is our salvation to be worked out.

SERMON 646.

THE DEBT OF MAN.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“Pay me that thou owest.”—*Matt.* xviii. 28.

Introduction.—Sad words to hear, when means, time, and opportunity have all been wasted; when there is nothing now left wherewith the debt can be paid. Sooner or later these words will be spoken to us by God; by the conscience; by our neighbour; who are our three chief creditors. Remembering (*Rom.* xiii. 7), let us consider the nature of our debt.

I. *To God.*—Pay the debt of—1) Love: since He is the Author of all things; according to the command (*Luke* x. 27); for (1 *John* iv. 8) God lends His love to be repaid back to Him with due and grateful interest. 2) Honour: for He is thy Father by creation; and honour is due from children to parents. (*Exod.* xx. 12.) 3) Fear: for He is Lord of all. ‘King of kings and Lord of lords.’ The servant ought to fear, as well as love and honour, his master. (*Mal.* i. 6.) Not with a craven, but with a holy fear, which leads to holiness. (*Prov.* iii. 7; *Eccles.* xii. 13.) Love God above all things; honour Him in all things; fear Him before all things.

II. *To ourselves.*—Pay thy debt of—1) Love: we ought to love ourselves since God loves us, and we ought to obey the commandments of love; to love ourselves; not in and for ourselves but as in and belonging to God. 2) Care: we ought to guard and preserve ourselves from dangers ghostly and bodily. Hence the gift of reason to defend and protect the course of life. 3) Salvation: we ought (*Phil.* ii. 12; *Eccles.* ix. 10). Let not the debt of eternal life weigh against the conscience at the Last Day.

III. *To our neighbour.*—Pay thy debt of—1) Love (*Matt.* xix. 19): dealing with Him as with thyself. 2) Instruction. if he wander seek to lead him back into the paths of righteousness. (*Matt.* xviii. 15; *James.* v. 20.) 3) Help and succour. (1 *John* iii. 17, 18; *Isa.* lviii. 7.)

Epilogue.—1) Husband and discipline every resource. 2) Strive and pray honestly to meet this triple debt.

SERMON 647.

REASONABLE SERVICE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.”—*Matt.* xviii. 23.

Introduction.—This Gospel implies that God is our Lord and King, and that we are His servants, subjects, or slaves. The two precepts, of the law of nature (*Ps.* xxxvii. 27), and of the Gospel (*Matt.* xxii. 37-41) imply this also. Jesus Christ, the Legislator of the new law of grace and mercy, willed to deliver two precepts: the one negative, and the other affirmative; which should include the precepts of nature and grace. He assumes our service as of right, for He is our Lord, because—

I. *He provides for us by His Providence.*—As our Heavenly Father. (*Matt.* vi. 31-33; *Ps.* cxxxvi. 25.) So was Elijah fed by ravens (*1 Kings* xvii. 6); and the widow of Zarephath who fed Elijah. (*1 Kings* xvii. 14.) Jehovah-jireh (*Gen.* xxii. 14) is written upon every day of our lives. Seek to recognise God’s ministering hand, and cast yourselves upon His merciful providence.

II. *He protects by His power.*—(*Isa.* xliii. 2, 3.)—By ‘water,’ the Israelites at Red Sea and Jordan. ‘Fire,’ the three holy children. David fought against the lion, bear, and giant. (*1 Sam.* xvii 34, 37, 50.) David was called God’s servant, and He was protected by God; so we being His servants should ever seek our protection from Him.

III. *He enriches us by His grace.*—He gives the seven-fold gifts of God the Holy Ghost (*Joel* ii. 28). Satan dowers us with the seven deadly sins; Jesus Christ with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. The fear of the Lord; mercy or charity; wisdom, fortitude, spirit of counsel, and of understanding, and of knowledge.

IV. *He will exalt us to His glory.*—Exalting His servants into His eternal kingdom and crowning them with joy. (*Matt.* xxv. 23; *Luke* xxii. 29, 30; *Isa.* xxxv. 10.) How opposite is the reward which the devil gives to his slaves. (*Isa.* lxxv. 12-15.) Queen of Sheba represents the Church; the kingdom of King Solomon the kingdom of Jesus Christ. His elect, His angels. (*1 Kings* x. 8.)

Epilogue.—We must pray, ‘Lord have patience with me!’ and so seek His pardoning love, that He may feed us, and deliver us from all evil, dower us with grace, and lead us to glory.

SERMON 643.

THE JUST ACCOUNT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.”—*Matt.* xviii. 23.

Introduction.—The kingdom of heaven here signifies the state of the Church Militant. 1) As being subject to the laws of heaven; 2) as pressing onwards toward heaven. As every man has a debt of some kind or other against his fellow-man, so are all debtors to God, Who will one day demand the settlement of His reckoning. Let us not delude ourselves with the thought that such a day will never come; but rather prepare ourselves for meeting it, by meditation upon the three following conditions—

I. *The sublimity of the judicial condition.*—‘A certain king,’ endowed with the highest power, will be our Judge. This King is Jesus Christ. (*Rev.* xix. 16.) His three attributes are—1) Infallible knowledge; 2) inflexible justice; 3) invincible power. Hence He is to be greatly feared. (*Jer.* x. 7.) Musing upon the holy life and death of Jesus Christ, we can hardly realize the fact of His combined great power, and His retributive justice. It seems almost impossible that one Who was once so very weak, should be again so mighty.

II. *The impossibility of final avoidance.*—‘Which would take account.’ What the Lord wills, that must happen; for with Him the will and the act are one. (*Rom.* xiv. 10.) Every obstacle will be removed; every condition will be fulfilled. By an irrepressible power we shall be brought to the dread tribunal. (*Rev.* xx. 12.)

III. *The necessity of obedient subjection.*—‘Of His servants,’ or slaves, as implying our total subjection to Him. (*Lev.* xix. 37.) If not unprofitable servants, of whom (*Matt.* xxv. 30); or a delivery ‘to the tormentors.’ This ought to be feared, since it must be endured. (*Heb.* x. 31.)

Epilogue.—Let the thought of this event lead us to propitiate the Judge in time, and to gain His pardon ere it be too late; before the eternal state is decreed.

SERMON 649.

PARDONING GRACE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“I say unto thee, Not until seven times, but until seventy times seven.”—

Matt. ix. 1.

Introduction.—The angels behold; the world wonders; men marvel when they see Christians returning good for evil. (1 Cor. iv. 9.) If to pardon be an act above nature, then it must be an act of grace. Hence our Blessed Lord said (*Matt. v. 44, 45*) not ye are, but ‘that ye may be;’ not children of nature, which you are already, but of God by imitation; for fatherhood implies ‘imitation.’ Hence Marcus Antoninus pardoned Cassianus for his rebellion and treason, saying, ‘Nothing so much as mercy commends the Roman Emperor to the world.’ Mercy made Cæsar almost into a god; this consecrated Augustus.

I. *The mercy of Jesus Christ is one proof of His Divinity.*—The Jews stoned Him. (*John viii. 59.*) Escaping, He restores the blind man to sight (*John ix. 6, 7*), in order that He might be more merciful, as His enemies were the more malignant. (*Iren.*) Other blind men He cured by a word; the born blind, by the touch and clay. The pierced side (*John xix. 34*) gave out ‘water,’ that washed away the guilt of the condemning Pilate; and ‘blood,’ to cleanse the Jews, who cried out. (*Matt. xxvii. 25.*) ‘O! pardoning grace of Jesus Christ.’ (*Luke xviii. 38.*) A third blind man calls out: ‘yet He did what David could not do. (*2 Sam. v. 6.*) The Pharisees taunt Him. (*Matt. ix. 24.*) Yet (*Matt. ix. 35*). Praying for Himself, He hid His Divinity. (*Matt. xxvii. 46.*) ‘My God,’ not Father; He claimed it praying for His enemies. (*Luke xxiii. 34.*) (*Ps. ii. 7*) refers to the Day of Redemption, in which all His enemies were delivered and pardoned.

II. *Seen in David and Moses.*—1) David promised of Him (*Ps. lxxxix. 25.*) Hence David was called (*Acts xiii. 22*); and his own prayer. (*Ps. cxxxii. i.*) ‘Afflictions,’ in an old reading ‘compassions.’ 2) Moses (*Exod. vii. 1*) not to be taken as, but as being to him, a God. For fear of idolatry. (*Deut. xxxiv. 6.*) He was more loved and honoured for His grace of pardoning, than for all His glorious and great deeds.

III. *It is a proof of Divine Sonship.*—It is a proof of Sonship to feel this grace beyond every other revelation. (*Matt. v. 44, 45.*) Hence (*Matt. vi. 12*). Jacob acknowledged this to Esau. (*Gen. xxxiii. 10.*)

Epilogue.—God is justified in showing mercy to the merciful.

SERMON 650.

GOD OUR AVENGER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“So likewise shall My heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”—*Matt.* xviii. 35.

Introduction.—The Emperor Justinian II. being in danger of shipwreck, vowed that if preserved he would pardon every injury he had received; and he was mercifully preserved, and found great joy of soul in keeping his vow. In this Gospel God the Lord becomes the avenger of the fellow-servant, who was unable to help himself. We are bound as Christians not to seek to avenge our own injuries, but to leave our case entirely in God's hands; to this committal of our cause to God we are bidden—

I. *By the voice of God.*—(*Deut.* xxxii. 35; *Rom.* xii. 19).—If your dog attacks a man on the road at your bidding, does he not meekly come back to you? Will you be less obedient to God? Such a dog was Laban, but he listened to the Master's voice. (*Gen.* xxxi. 23, 24, 29, 44.) Hence the parable of the unjust judge. (*Luke* xviii. 7, 8.) If we commit ourselves body and soul unto God's keeping, we can at His command trust Him to avenge our injuries.

II. *By the example of God.*—Does God endure our injuries? How many? For how long? David restrained himself by reflection from avenging the conduct of Shimei. (*Ps.* xxxviii. 12-16.) This feeling led David to condone the incest of Ammon and the rebellion of Absalom; he felt how very guilty he was himself in God's sight, and yet how God had spared him. Samuel felt no injury to himself, only to God. (*1 Sam.* viii. 7.)

III. *By the severity of God's judgments.*—They are far severer than any man could inflict; as is shown in this Gospel. As of Joash, who killed Zechariah. (*2 Chron.* xxiv. 21, 23.) This Zechariah is supposed to be alluded to by our Blessed Lord. (*John* viii. 50; *Ps.* xciv. 1.) God's eternal punishment is far more severe than any temporal pain man can inflict.

IV. *By the honour that God gives to mercy.*—1) It shows that the mind is unmoved by winds of anger. (*Phil.* ii. 15.) 2) It proves that the sin of your enemy is not yours. 3) It exhibits the presence of grace in the soul. (*Jer.* xli. 8.)

Epilogue.—As we need pardon and salvation, we should seek for others these gifts.

SERMON 651.

THE TORMENTORS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“His Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors.”—*Matt.* xviii. 34.

Introduction.—The ‘tormentors’ exercise their functions in a place called ‘the outer darkness.’ (*Matt.* xxv. 30.) Such a place was the Thesaurus in Messenia; a large cavern destitute alike of light and of air, into which the condemned were let down by ropes, the mouth of which was closed by a large stone. Philopoemen was hidden there and poisoned. In such a place as this, we can conceive the ungrateful debtor to have been imprisoned. ‘Thesaurus’ is an almost prophetic name, considering. (*Jer.* l. 25.) ‘Armoury’ is also treasure, or Thesaurus. (*Rom.* ii. 5.) The torment of this place of tormentors arises from—

I. *The hopelessness of escape or liberation.*—The imprisonment here knows of no end; is for ever and ever. (*Matt.* iii. 12.) ‘Unquenchable.’ (*Matt.* xxv. 46; *Isa.* lxvi. 24.) Can any one conceive how great and long is this eternity? ‘For ever and ever.’ (*Exod.* xv. 18; *Micah* iv. 5.) Try to count the sand upon the sea shore; millions upon millions of grains: try to reckon up the years of eternity.

II. *The weight which presses down the condemned.*—The stone which covers the mouth of this cave is the weight of an eternity. Zechariah’s ‘talent of lead.’ (*Zech.* v. 8.) The heathen prefigured this in part. (*Ænid* vi. 603.) The ‘ephah’ is this place of torment. An idea has power to crush us now; how must the bare idea of eternity press down upon the lost.

III. *The unceasing torment.*—Never any relief; not a moment’s ease or forgetfulness. (*Rev.* xiv. 11.) Ascending smoke is a sign of the fire enkindled. (*Isa.* xxx. 27, 28.) Neither day nor night, nor rain, nor dew; no distraction even of mind or body: one continuous endeavour of pain, bodily and mental.

IV. *The weariness and pain of being.*—A wakeful night seems multiplied into three. With God. (*Ps.* xc. 4.) The same round, or rather unvarying sameness, which makes an agony in itself. (*Imitation* lib. i. c. 24.) The Children of Israel after even a short time loathed manna. (*Num.* xxi. 5; xi. 6.)

V. *The spectators of this wretchedness.*—(*Rev.* xiv. 10; vi. 16, 17).—This formed the agony of Samson. (*Judges* xvi. 27, 28.) It carries shame here; it will increase the agony of hereafter.

Epilogue.—Seek, by all and every means, to avoid this dreadful lot.

SERMON 652.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“Peter said unto Jesus . . . his brother their trespasses.”—*Matt.* xviii.
21-35.

Introduction.—If a king or prince demanded any great service at our hand, we should be summoned, instructed, armed, and rendered fit to undertake it. In this Gospel an ‘account is taken.’ (Joel iii. 2.) God wills us to be ready and prepared. (Ezek. xviii. 31, 32.) The lessons of the Gospel help our preparation. We note—

I. *The great goodness and clemency of God.*—Delay was asked for, and remission was given. ‘How great the love; the gift exceeds the petition.’ ‘A new reason for conquering is, that you may fortify yourself by mercy and liberality.’ Cæsar did this; ever forgiving: and when reproached that he weakened his power, said, ‘True, but I make it more secure and lasting.’ ‘I wish,’ said King Alphonsus, ‘to preserve many by my mercy, whilst I destroy few by my severity.’

II. *The great power of humility.*—The servant kneeled down and prayed in a few simple words, and the anger of his lord was quickly appeased, and he was forgiven his debt. Certain lions spare a prey that prostrates itself before them. So did the Gibeonites, and they gained a covenant with Joshua. (Josh. ix. 3-15.)

III. *The punishment is one thing, the fault is another.*—Firstly, there is a freeing from the dominion of Satan, and then there is a remission of the punishment. Two distinct acts: sin is often pardoned, but the punishment of it remains. The penitent thief suffered on the cross; Moses and Aaron were kept from the Promised Land; David had no peace after his fall; Eli’s fearful punishment. (Micah vii. 9.) This anger is twofold:—1) Against the person defiled by sin; 2) against the debt of punishment which the sin has contracted. First anger is atoned by repentance; the second by satisfaction. Absalom was pardoned, yet he was not admitted to David’s presence. (2 Sam. xiv. 28.)

IV. *The inconstancy and mutability of man.*—The pardoned debtor became thoughtless and hard-hearted creditor. David spared Saul when in adversity, but he committed, when in prosperity, both murder and adultery.

V. *The need we have to forgive injuries.*—Like our Blessed Lord, and S. Stephen, we must pray for our murderers. (Acts vii. 60.) To rest in soul is to pray for our enemies.

SERMON 653.

HEAVEN.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“Our conversation is in heaven.”—*Phil.* iii. 20.

Introduction.—The heavenly life on earth is realized in two ways. Firstly, when we lead imperfectly on earth such a life as we shall do perfectly hereafter in heaven. As when we despise earthly things (*Phil.* iii. 7, 8); in purity (2 *Cor.* x. 3, 4); in the light of heavenly wisdom (1 *Cor.* ii. 6, 7); in love confirmed by experience and fervour (*Rom.* viii. 35-39; 1 *Cor.* xi. 16); in praise (*Rom.* i. 8); in prayer (*Phil.* i. 9). Secondly, in internal and heavenly contemplation, desire, and hope. (2 *Cor.* iii. 18; iv. 18.) In thought and in action the life in heaven ought to be our rule here on earth.

I. *Heaven is our country.*—(*Heb.* xiii. 14; *John* xvii. 16.) Three notes by which it may be known, whether heaven be our country or not:—1) Our speech. (*Matt.* xxvi. 73; *John* iii. 31, 34.) Alas! true of the many. (*Isa.* xxix. 4.) 2) Our habits. (*Phil.* i. 27.) 3) Our mutual love. (*John* xiii. 35.) Heaven is our everlasting resting-place; the end of our journey through life; our true home, with all the association of our lost and our loved ones.

II. *Heaven is the dwelling-place of our Father.*—Our Father dwells there, we ought in mind to dwell with Him there too. (*Matt.* xxiii. 9; *John* xii. 26.) ‘There dwells the Father of truth, of wisdom, of blessing, of light, of our illumination and the pledge, by which we are exhorted to return to Thee.’ (*Aug.*)

III. *Heaven is our true treasure-house.*—(*Matt.* vi. 21; 2 *Tim.* i. 12.)—‘This life is full of imperfections and needs; of cares and disappointments. We are needy pilgrims here, but in heaven we shall possess a treasury of immortality, glory, wisdom, love, and power.’

IV. *Heaven is the land of happiness.*—(*Deut.* viii. 7; 1 *John* i. 3.)—For every end of our being will be perfectly fulfilled, and every desire fully satisfied.

Epilogue.—In life and thought prepare for this heavenly citizenship.

SERMON 654.

HEAVENLY CONVERSATION.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Our conversation is in heaven.”—*Phil.* iii. 20.

Introduction.—As far as the hidden life of grace is concerned this is true of the Apostles, doctors, and of all the faithful in every age, in whom the heavenly life of the glorified is begun even now whilst they are still on earth. This ‘conversation’ partakes of the several attributes of Heaven. It is—

I. *An exalted conversation.*—Heaven is a lofty sublimity, no one can measure it. The heavenly life despises all things sordid, mean, and low; all base delights; bestial instincts; mere worldly attractions. (*Phil.* iii. 8; *Ezek.* vii. 19.)

II. *An even conversation.*—Heaven is a round, a sphere, having nothing crooked in it. There are no angles in the heavenly life either of avarice, anger, jealousy, or the like. (1 Peter ii. 1, 2.) ‘Malice,’ is the angle of hatred; ‘guile,’ is the angle of unfairness in dealing, etc. All sin destroys the roundness or perfection of the soul.

III. *A pure conversation.*—Heaven has neither spot nor stain. Heaven cannot, like earthly houses, be purified; fire touches it not. Its pureness preserves it, just as pureness preserves the soul. Some are burnt who fall into luxury. (*Job* xxxi. 12.) Others are but warmed who talk and delight in, but do not actual commit, sin. (*Isa.* xlv. 16.) Others are spotted, though innocent, by evil association. (*Lam.* iv. 8.)

IV. *A bright and cheerful conversation.*—Heaven is all brightness, no shadow there. The soul of a Christian is as a world above the moon; there it is ever serene. Keep it clear and cleansed from the darkness of error (*Deut.* iv. 6); and this must be openly professed. (*Rom.* x. 10.)

V. *A firm and stable conversation.*—Heaven is an abiding changeless place; it will never have an end; the heavenly life claims a firm faith, obedience, and profession. (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

Epilogue.—Imitate the heavenly life now, so as to be wholly fitted for it hereafter.

SERMON 655.

THE CLAIMS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“Render unto God the things that are God’s.”—*Matt.* xxii. 21.

Introduction.—All that we are and have belongs to God; our highest duty and service; ourselves, body, soul, and spirit; our lives, with all their aims, energies, pursuits, failures, and successes. We note some of the few special claims which God holds over us.

I. *Our adoration.*—He is the Supreme Majesty: to be adored not with the lips or the body only, but with the whole spirit, heart, affections, and worship. Such honour belongs not, and is not to be given, to another. (*Matt.* iv. 10.) The soul bows down in adoration before the invisible majesty and sublimity of God.

II. *Our service.*—(*Matt.* iv. 10.)—He holds a dominion over us which is supreme, independent, eternal, unchangeable. He holds our service as—1) Universal Lord over all His creatures; 2) as our Creator, Who stamped His image, likeness, and seal upon Adam in the beginning; 3) as our Preserver, Who sustains us by His Providence and Fatherly care; 4) as our adopted Father, we His adopted sons; 5) as our Redeemer and purchaser by His Blood; 6) our Commutator, Who changed the life of His Son for our lives (*Rom.* xiv. 8); 7) our Claimer; we were in baptism given over and up to Him.

III. *Our holy fear.*—As being—1) Omnipotent. 2) The Author of life and death. 3) The Judge and Avenger. 4) Holding the lots of salvation in His hand.

IV. *Our perfect and entire faith.*—As—1) Truth; 2) as Eternal Wisdom; 3) as neither able to deceive or be deceived. We must accept His mysteries which lie beyond the domain of reason.

V. *Our firm hope.*—He is our beginning and our end; we went out from Him at Creation; we now walk by hope; we go on to glory.

VI. *Our whole and perfect love.*—He is supreme goodness; the origin and fulness of all good; He is the cause, centre, and reward of our love.

Epilogue.—Such service as this banishes sin, and is a service of holiness.

SERMON 656.

THE IMAGE OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“Whose is this image?”—*Matt.* xxii. 20.

Introduction.—The old philosophers speak very highly of man, calling him ‘the divine wonder and boundary of the universe.’ (Plato.) ‘The one thing most excellent, of all things in the world.’ (Arist.) ‘The measure of all things.’ (Sext. Emp.) ‘The great miracle of nature.’ (Trismeg.) ‘Mortal God.’ (Pythag.) ‘Microcosm.’ (Plautus.) ‘The shadow of God.’ (Tertull.) ‘The first-fruits of His creatures.’ (James i. 18.) Man, as bearing God’s image, exceeds all these definitions; he is as many-sided as is God Himself, etc. This thought leads us to consider—

I. *The preservation of this image.*—Diogenes went into the forum with a light in the day-time to seek for men; the crowd laughed and jeered at him. ‘You are not men, but cattle, he replied. So of Jerusalem. (Lam. i. 1.) Few really live as men. (Ps. xiv. 3; xlix. 12, 20; Aul. Gell. Noc. lib. xix. c. 2.) Like Nebuchadnezzar, wicked men destroy this image, and they are compared to beasts. (Phil. iii. 2; Rev. xxii. 15; Luke xiii. 32; Ps. lxiii. 10; lviii. 4.) Dogs, foxes, serpents, etc., represent those who have lost this image. ‘How can I reckon them to be men, when I see in them no sign of human nature?’ (Chrysos.) Characteristics tell of man. (Ignat. ad Mag. c. 6.)

II. *That Adam lost this image by sin.*—He then had his clothing of skins, and his food in common with the beasts. Compare (Gen. ii. 16 and iii. 17.) The hair of this covering assimilated Adam to the beasts.

III. *The first question in the Judgment.*—Of each soul: ‘Whose is this image? Is it bright or dark? (Ps. lxxxii. 2.) These persons resemble the several creatures whose habits they have adopted: the lion, pride; the wolf, covetousness; the ass, stolidity; the leopard, hypocrisy; the hyæna, cruelty, etc.

IV. *It is high treason to deface the images of kings.*—Most severe laws are passed against defacing coins and statutes, and the seals that are put upon possession which lapsed by death to the State. It is high treason in man to efface the image of God from his soul.

V. *God became Incarnate to restore this lost image.*—The second Adam came to restore that which the first Adam had lost, that man might again become the seal of the Lord.

Epilogue.—Consider the features of this image, and seek for like graces.

SERMON 657.

GOD'S LIKENESS IN THE SOUL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“Whose is this image and superscription?”—*Matt.* xxii. 20.

Introduction.—It is a common lament with spiritual writers, that whilst men are careful about every other kind of learning, tracing out the number and the courses of the stars, the currents of the ocean, etc., they are utterly ignorant and careless about their souls; that they live as if they had no soul at all. So (*Luke* xii. 19, 20) men feed the body and starve the soul; they value all other things at a due price, yet set no value on the soul. Such are (*Ps.* xlix. 20). That this complaint be not laid to our charge, let us consider the soul as the image of God, and ask, ‘Whose is this image?’

I. *Men's care for pictures and images.*—The highest prices are given for, and the greatest care is taken of, works of art; paintings and sculptures. So in early times. When Demetrius besieged Rhodes, he refused to fire a part of the city which would have made him master of the whole, because he knew a picture of Protogenes was extant in that quarter of the city. He forfeited a victory to spare a picture. The Athenians reckoned beyond all price the statue of Minerva in the Parthenon, for Phidias had carved his own likeness on the shield, which no one could obtain without destroying the whole image. Of infinite greater value is the image of God (*Gen.* i. 27), in which an inseparable association of the divine attributes shines out. (*Ps.* iv. 6.)

II. *The soul is the image of God.*—1) As the divine mind is above other perfections, so is the soul above other created things. (*Chrysos.*) 2) ‘As God knows and loves the highest perfections of His nature, so the soul imitates these things in knowing and loving God.’ (*Aug.*) 3) As the immensity of Divinity exists everywhere in power, so does the soul rule throughout the entire body.

III. *This image was lost by sin, and it is restored by grace.*—Learn, O Christian, thy dignity. A partaker of the divine nature, return not to the vileness of the old life.

Epilogue.—Flee from every sin which defiles this image; cherish repentance by which it cleanses it anew.

SERMON 658.

STRIVING AGAINST TRUTH.—(*Holy Gospel,* Ser. IV.)

"Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk."—*Matt. xxii. 15.*

Introduction.—So ever do the wicked hate the righteous; the poor the rich; the ignorant the learned; the worse the better. Jesus Christ had not injured these Pharisees, but they hated Him, simply because of His purity of life, which reprov'd their hypocrisy, and His comprehensive teachings, which exceeded the boundaries of their exclusiveness. We note three points in their present attack.

I. *The perversity of their consultation.*—'Took counsel how they might entangle Him;' 'ensnare Him;' so as to make Him commit Himself, that they might be able by one slip to undermine his entire teaching. Such minds were plotting together against the Light, the Life, the Way, and the Truth: against all that was best and holiest that had ever come into this world. So do we, when we resist the pleadings of conscience, of God's spirit, and of God's providences. We take counsel with our evil selves, how we may involve God's commands in obscurity and contradiction. Hence we undermine the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and we perceive defects in the teaching of the Church.

II. *The malignity of their convention.*—'They sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians, who were the publicans who collected the taxes. Themselves powerless to harm Him, they tried to make Him harm Himself in public opinion. Such an attack was—1) Cowardly; 2) subtle; 3) malicious: and this we join in with them, when we listen to the devil tempting us with the occasions to sin.

III. *The craftiness of their pretence.*—'Master, we know that thou art true,' etc. They came to Him with—1) a false homage; 2) a false praise and agreement; 3) a false humility: and their deceit was all turned back upon themselves.

Epilogue.—Oh! strive not against the truth, lest doing as did the Jews, you suffer a like punishment.

SERMON 659.

WHY MAN BEARS GOD'S IMAGE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. V.)

“Whose is this image?”—*Matt. xxii. 20.*

Introduction.—Man alone was created by the council of the Blessed Trinity (Gen. i. 26), to express the dignity and excellence of this image. Pythagoras would not allow any of his followers to have a likeness of God graven, or any ring, etc., lest the Deity should be brought into contempt. How should we fear, lest by ourselves bearing God's image He should be lowered? Why confer so high a dignity upon forgetful man? (Ps. viii. 4.) We cannot understand why (Rom. xi. 33-36), yet we may give a few probable reasons.

I. *That creation might reverence man.*—Man bore God's image, that he might rightly have dominion over the other creatures (Gen. i. 28); and after the flood (Gen. ix. 2), and even for Cain there was a mark of protection. Heaven and earth, sun, moon, stars, and all other creatures, cannot but serve one who bears God's image.

II. *That man might specially belong to God.*—To teach man that he is specially and peculiarly God's own, does He place upon him His image, and seals man with His seal, that so he may be perpetually convicted when he separates himself from God, and cleaves to the world and the devil; convicted by his conscience, and by all that witness against him.

III. *That God might have intercourse with man.*—This image enables God to have familiar doings and intercourse with man, as He had with Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc. As before Eve there was no companion for Adam in the irrational creatures, so God could not hold converse, save with one bearing His own image. Of creation generally (Gen. i. 31); of man specially. (Prov. viii. 31.) Hence Job's wonder. (Job vii. 17-19.)

IV. *That man might be able to know God.*—To have some understanding of God and His ways, and of the marvellous relationship between God and the mind, that renders a mutual understanding possible (Rom. i. 20), so that in ourselves as in a mirror, the figure of divine mercy may shine.

V. *That man might be capable of eternal glory.*—Nothing but eternity and God can satisfy the infinite desires of man's mind, which requires the seal of God.

Epilogue.—Cling to God, and vindicate this relationship.

SERMON 660.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. VI.)

“Whose is this image?”—*Matt. xxii. 20.*

Introduction.—We must ask this question of the image of our soul, by frequently inspecting it. (*Ecclus. xxxviii. 28*), looking at the likeness of Jesus Christ, and seeking to transfer it to our souls by diligent examination. (*Phil. ii. 5*.) A time will come when to the Judge of all we shall have to show the image of our life; to be viewed for ever either by the light of heaven or by the fire of hell. Does the soul bear the image of Jesus Christ or of Antichrist? of God or of Satan? Many must say, with S. Ambrose, ‘I do not know my own image.’ Self-examination teaches this. We note—

I. *A threefold simile of self-knowledge.*—Examination of conscience is to the soul—1) What the weights are to a clock. ‘My love is my weight.’ (*Aug.*) 2) What the pump is to a ship: all ships leak, some a little; and all souls are more or less charged with sin. 3) What weeding is to a garden; the soil of the soul often choked up with weeds.

II. *Examples of examination of conscience.*—1) God Himself. (*Gen. i. 31.*) 2) Isaac at his mother’s death. (*Gen. xxiv. 63.*) 3) David. (*Psa. lxxvii. 6.*) 4) Ruth. (*Ruth ii. 17.*) We are either reapers or gleaners in the field of the soul, gathering up the three measures of compunction, of union with God, and cautions for our future life. 5) The unjust steward. (*Luke xvi. 3.*) 6) (*1 Cor. xi. 31.*) Man must ascend the tribunal of his own mind, and make his judgment upon himself. 7) (*Exod. xxx. 34-37.*) Spices are graces which are ground by examination of conscience, and we place our ‘confection,’ before the ‘Tabernacle of testimony’ as our own witness for or against ourselves; so that it can be asked of the righteous. (*Cant. iii. 6.*)

III. *A diligent care of the image of the soul.*—Let us then consider that each day of our lives we are painting a picture upon the soul; and be careful to examine this picture and see what it is growing like. Seneca said, ‘I consign to you the image of my life.’ He had so lived as not to be ashamed of life.

Epilogue.—May the image of Jesus Christ be on the soul: He is and will be my image for ever

SERMON 661.

THE TRIBUTE MONEY.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“Show Me the tribute money.”—*Matt.* xxii. 19.

Introduction.—This ‘tribute money;’ the silver denarius, with its inscription and likeness of the king, tropologically signifies the rational soul, on which is engraved the likeness of the eternal King; ornamented with the three natural powers, memory, understanding, and will; by which is represented the Trinity, engraven by the seven-fold finger of God with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. It is a ‘denarius’ so embracing the decalogue. The mind, like a mirror, receives the image and superscription of him towards whom it turns. This ‘tribute money’ of the soul is demanded—

I. *By the Devil.*—‘Show me the tribute money;’ that I may falsify the inscription, and destroy the image of God thereon. He suggests that the human soul should turn to himself, and so become a perfect similitude of diabolical depravity. Hence the ‘evil spirit’ which coming upon Saul embittered his last days with envy, cruelty, and fear, and which brought him down to an ignominious death. (1 Sam. xvi. 14; xviii. 12.)

II. *By the Flesh.*—‘Show me,’ etc., that I may wear it away by the rust of pleasure; which consumes those who delight in the lusts and the infirmities of the flesh. Such are represented. (Rom. vii. 14, 22-25.) Whose bonds are the five senses, the dominion of which lowers a man below the beasts. (Psa. xlix. 12.) Pharaoh, King of Egypt, perished by his abominable obstinacy. Nebuchadnezzar was actually degraded for a time. (Dan. iv. 33.)

III. *The World.*—‘Show me,’ etc., that I may lighten it by the affection of earthly favour. Of such. (Matt. vi. 1.) The world had not corrupted Hezekiah, so his prayer was heard. (2 Kings xx. 3-5.) Undue contact with it rubs and defaces all the beauty and freshness of the coin; much contact with sinners rubs off the finer emotions of the soul.

IV. *Jesus Christ.*—‘Show Me,’ etc., that I may renew it, and restore it from all its defects by awakening—1) Tearful contrition. (Gen. xlix. 11.) 2) An exemplary life after His example. (Cant. i. 15.) 3) Compassionate love like that of Esther. (Esther vii. 3.)

Epilogue.—Strive to keep this coin as bright as possible.

SERMON 662.

GOD'S GREAT POSSESSION.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)“Render unto God the things that are God's.”—*Matt.* xxii. 21.

Introduction.—The heart, or the love of man, is the highest thing of all. In the peace offerings the breast or heart was to be Aaron's and his sons'. (*Lev.* vii. 31.) The high priesthood of Aaron represented God's own claim. This command said (*Prov.* xxiii. 26); for nothing is more worthy than that it should restore itself to Him whence it had its being. The heart is given to God, when every thought—1) rests and ends in Him; 2) surrounds Him; 3) desires nothing beyond Him. This is demanded by—

I. *The honour of God.*—It is due to the honour and glory of the soul that it be given to God. If we know God to be the chief good and rightly value it, we must love Him above all things. If we do not love Him, it is a sign that we neither value Him, nor honour Him. Certain nations of old valued not gold, and held it to be of no account. The Jews gave not their heart to Jesus Christ. They held Him to be as nothing; they preferred Barabbas to Him. (*Isa.* l. 2; *1 Cor.* xvi. 22.)

II. *The love of God.*—‘He first loved us,’ and still loves us, showering His blessings upon us. Reciprocal love is the only return which we can make to Him. 1) Love will only be compensated by love. 2) Save love, we have nothing of our own to offer to Him.

III. *Our great need.*—Without the love of God we are nothing; we walk by the love of the Blessed God. (*1 Cor.* xiii. 1.) We need this love to make us—1) Sustained in adversity. 2) Calm in prosperity. 3) Strong in suffering. 4) Joyful in well doing. 5) Safe in temptation. This love wrought mightily in Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses; in the Apostles.

IV. *The sin of the world.*—This love weans us from undue love of the world, which deceives the soul first, and kills it afterwards. It enabled the Apostles to forsake all things, and Joseph to see Benjamin before his other brethren.

Epilogue.—Let us give God our heart, our love, our all.

SERMON 663.

THE TEMPTERS OF GOD.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Why tempt ye me?”—*Matt.* xxii. 18.

Introduction.—Anger and the like passions were not inherent in our Blessed Lord; but He assumed them when to do so was useful for men; as when contending with the devil at the temptation (*Matt.* iv. 10); or when rebuking S. Peter; or when arguing with and correcting the Scribes and Pharisees. Satan is the great tempter. (*James* i. 13.) When we tempt God or man, we follow Satan. Do we dare to tempt God? Alas! yes, when—

I. *We worship Him without reverence.*—Then we both tempt and abuse His goodness and mercy. Such (*Ezek.* viii. 7-17; *Matt.* xxv. 3). Praying in word, not in thought; bending the knee, but not the heart; coming thoughtlessly into God’s presence, and not fitting ourselves to receive His spiritual gifts.

II. *We endeavour to elude His eye.*—Seeking to escape from His wisdom and knowledge. Acting as hypocrites, we tempt His wisdom. So did the Scribes and Pharisees. (*Matt.* xvi. 1; xix. 3; *Luke* x. 25.) Such are they who appear outwardly just and holy, having an evil heart within. So did the wife of Jeroboam. (*1 Kings* xiv. 5, 6.) All hypocrites tempt the knowledge of God.

III. *We doubt His care.*—We tempt His providence; as the Israelites did so often in the wilderness. (*Exod.* xvii. 2; *Deut.* vi. 15.) We seek to work without Him; we are impatient at His delays; forgetful that often God does not bring us out of the cloud of temptation until He has purified us.

IV. *We add sin to sin.*—Tempting His long-suffering. (*Mal.* iii. 15.) So the spies. (*Num.* xiv. 22; *Psa.* lxxviii. 56.) Sinners like these, play with God in heaping up to themselves larger and larger measures of wrath; as the Lacedæmonians, promising the ambassadors earth and water, threw them into a well. So false teachers. (*Isa.* xxviii. 13.)

IV. *We ask for signs and wonders.*—Thus tempting God’s power. So Satan. (*Matt.* iv. 6.) Such—1) Wish for an end without the means; 2) take no care for themselves; 3) expect glory after a wicked life.

Epilogue.—See that you tempt not God to your destruction.

SERMON 664.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

"Then went the Pharisees and took counsel . . . went their way."—
Matt. xxii. 15-23.

Introduction.—We accept the statement of His adversaries as to how we ought to love and value Jesus Christ. (*Matt.* xxii. 16.) We should seek to hear Him, not to 'entangle Him,' but to be ourselves entangled in His talk. We learn from His present words that—

I. *Flatterers are to be repelled.*—We are to repel and to reprove all flattery. The flatterers sought to lure our Blessed Lord into treason, but He exposed them: 'Why tempt ye Me?' Flatterers eat out the eye of the soul, like crows pick out the eye of the body. Sigismund struck a flatterer, who said, 'Why, O emperor, did you smite me?' The emperor answered, 'Why did you bite me, O flatterer?' Flatterers are to be repelled as being—1) Enemies concealed under the guise of friends. 2) Vile and infamous, they turn all things to their own end. 3) Harmful; ensnaring men as the bird-catchers do birds, and not, like the farmer, driving them away with stones.

II. *Hypocrites are to be avoided.*—For they are—1) False; 2) unearnest; 3) unstable; detected by God. (*Hosea* v. 3; *Zeph.* i. 8.) The 'clothed with strange apparel,' are the hypocrites. In the Day of Judgment the hidden iniquity will be brought to light, and the false skin taken off.

III. *Persons are not to be respected.*—The Lord valued the Pharisees and the courtly Herodians at their true and proper value; convicting them out of their own mouths. (*Deut.* i. 17.)

IV. *Speech is to be used with caution.*—Our Blessed Lord answered cautiously and indirectly, 'Show Me the tribute money;' no angry argument. We must consider first and speak afterwards. (*James* iii. 2.)

V. *Each one is to have his own.*—Cæsar, Cæsar's; and God, God's things. 'Whose is this image?' To whom does this building, money, article, etc., belong? So learn to render to God His own; remembering the case of Herod. (*Acts* xii. 23.)

Epilogue.—Do not marvel and go away; but think upon these spoken words, and try to carry them out, imitating the Great Teacher.

SERMON 665.

THE PATH OF HOLINESS.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“We do not cease to pray for you, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord.”—*Col. i. 9, 10.*

Introduction.—A most difficult thing for the Colossians or for any others to ‘walk worthy of the Lord;’ so to tread along the pathway of life that their path may be that of ‘the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.’ The King’s highway of the Holy Cross is a difficult path to tread, for many reasons, of which we note some three.

I. *It is a difficult path to follow.*—There is a danger of losing the way. For—1) There are many roads which run along by the road to heaven for a space; many which the wicked traverse; but there is only one road that leads right through to the City of God. Hence the prayer (Ps. xxv. 4). Hence it is true of the wicked (Ps. cvii. 4). Our Lord’s teaching (Matt. vii. 14). 2) But few companion travellers (Isa. xxxiii. 8); so we cannot often ask for guidance, help, and sympathy. The spiritual life is trodden for the most part alone. 3) The way is often obscure; doubts and doctrines darken the soul (John xii. 35); our way is not clear before the eye of the mind. 4) False signs deceive; the marks of the heavenly road are set up on the way to hell by hypocrites, false teachers, heretics, and the like. (Matt. vii. 15.)

II. *It is a dangerous path.*—(Isa. xxiv. 17.)—1) Pitfalls from the weakness of the flesh. (Prov. xxiii. 27.) 2) Robbers who would deprive us of grace, and laugh us out of any attempted holiness; that so we may descend from Jerusalem, ‘the Vision of Peace,’ to care only for Jericho, this changing world. (Luke x. 30.)

III. *It is a fatiguing path.*—In which many fail. 1) For the want of spiritual food (Matt. xv. 32). So Elijah was nourished (1 Kings xix. 7); hence of spiritual migration (Gen. xxxiii. 13). 2) From trying to run too fast instead of walking (Prov. xix. 2); they faint before they reach the goal. 3) From lingering and loitering, either because the way is rough (Num. xxi. 4; Gal. vi. 9); or too pleasant (Num. xxxii. 1-5).

Epilogue.—Never despair of being able to overcome all these difficulties. Remembering (2 Cor. xii. 9).

SERMON 666.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“Increasing in the knowledge of God.”—*Col.* i. 10.

Introduction.—Unless we know God we cannot do His Will. We, God’s servants, if we know not our Master’s will, when we may think we are pleasing Him may be offending Him. Not every one can learn this knowledge of God (*Matt.* vii. 21), but they alone who possess—

I. *Divine truth.*—So as firmly to believe the Verities of the Faith. One false opinion may endanger the whole fabric of our faith. There must be one common foundation upon which faith is built; this is as the cliff upon which a terrace is built; and if the cliff should fall, all the houses would fall with it. (*1 Cor.* iii. 2; *1 Tim.* ii. 3, 4; *John* vii. 17.)

II. *Cordial charity.*—The understanding is to be informed by truth; the will, by love. Love is devotion to God, love to one’s neighbour. If love reigned on earth, no place could be found for fraud, cruelty, lust, or avarice; devotion to God would rule supreme. The barbarism of savage nations is wholly destitute of the love of God.

III. *Personal purity.*—Being freed from evil thoughts and desires; as being—1) Created in God’s image. 2) Redeemed by God’s own Son. 3) Regenerated by the baptismal laver. (*1 Thess.* iv. 2.)

IV. *Honest example.*—To give no cause for scandal or offence, we must appear to be holy as well as be so. Every artificer desires praise for his work. (*1 Pet.* ii. 15.)

V. *Amicable unity.*—Which leads us to live in good friendship without hatred or rancour, as being members of the one Body of Jesus Christ. The head, is Jesus Christ; the eyes, the contemplation; the nose, devotion; arms, temporal powers; belly, benefactors; feet, the artificers. (*Rom.* xii. 4, 8.)

VI. *Brotherly kindness.*—Communicating to others what we have received. Either things temporal or spiritual. (*Luke* vi. 35; xi. 41.)

VII. *Virtual firmness.*—Not to lay down the Cross in the middle of the journey, but to carry it to the end, so as to receive the reward. (*Matt.* x. 22; *Rev.* ii. 10.)

Epilogue.—Strive so to live, as to know and to do the will of God.

SERMON 667.

THE RETURN OF LIFE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. I.)

“The maid arose.”—*Matt.* ix. 25.

Introduction.—The daughter of Jairus represents a soul dying and dead in secret sin, for she was not yet carried out of the house. The spiritual teaching of this miracle points to those means by which secret sinners are aroused from the death of sin into the life of righteousness. In this return to life through grace, we note—

I. *The father's prayer and intercession.*—By this is indicated the suffrage of prayer. Jairus means, ‘The enlightened’ or ‘the enlightener;’ hence he represents the assembly of the saints, who, being enlightened by God, enlighten others, as the mountains transmit the rays of the sun to the valleys.—(*Ps.* cxxi. 1.)

II. *The lifting hand.*—‘He took her by the hand. The grace which helps and draws the soul out of the abyss of sin. (*Amos* ix. 2.) The enlightened sinner sees his wretched estate, but it is the hand of grace alone that can deliver him.

III. *The expulsion of the minstrels.*—‘Give place.’ The minstrels vainly rejoice, for the world’s joy is a very mournful song, and it is soon turned into mourning. (*Amos* viii. 3, 10.) The world often sings over that for which it ought far rather to weep. Hence (*Eccles.* ii. 2.)

IV. *The people driven out.*—This tumultuous concourse represents those inopportune thoughts which sometimes oppress the soul. They are represented by the band of (2 *Kings* vii. 17). The pressure of circumstances and of life often weigh down the spiritual life of the soul even unto death.

V. *The presence of SS. Peter, James, and John.*—(*Mark* v. 37).—These three Apostles were admitted to the more solemn actions of the Lord’s life. John, or grace, is the special grace of contrition or compunction, which leads the will to repentance. (*Rom.* vii. 18; *1 Cor.* xv. 10.) Peter: ‘knowing’ the agnition of confession of sin (*Ps.* xxxii. 5); James: that ‘wrestling’ with self which leads to satisfaction. (*Micah* iv. 10.)

VI. *The presence of the father and mother.*—(*Mark* v. 40.) Meditation upon our origin, upon labour, life, punishment, and death. (*Job* xvii. 14.)

Epilogue.—One or all these elements must work together, ere from secret sin the soul can be quickened into spiritual life.

SERMON 663.

THE GREAT HEALER.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

“If I may but touch His garment I shall be whole.”—*Matt.* ix. 21.

Introduction.—Every miracle, and every word of the Gospel, places the Lord before us in a new light; we see something in Him that we have not seen before. Each succeeding action leaves a permanent impression of Himself behind it; each word and deed is an opening of the door of the heavenly temple, and is a revelation or glimpse of the glory within. In the healing of this poor woman we note—

I. *The sight or vision of Jesus Christ.*—‘Jesus turned Him about and saw her.’ This look was that glance of divine compassion with which Jesus Christ looks at the sinner; with which he looked upon S. Peter (*Luke* xxii. 61), and which healed this poor woman. The rays of the sun penetrate the earth, and fertility and fruitfulness follow; how much more when the Eye of love and mercy penetrates the heart of man, enlightening its deepest abysses. Should it not produce the fruits of holiness, warmed into a new and spiritual generation by the rays of the love of Jesus Christ? The brightness of His face also draws sinners into Himself, as the sun draws the clouds.

II. *The words of Jesus Christ.*—1) It changes old things into new. (*Luke* xxii. 19.) 2) It gives life to the dead. (*Luke* vii. 14, 15.) 3) It gives healing. (*Matt.* viii. 3.) The woman was healed by His word: ‘Daughter, be of good comfort.’ (*Ps.* lxxviii. 33.) The breath of Jesus Christ is a storehouse of all medicines, and the words coming from it are words of health and healing. He is the ‘Tree of Life,’ and His words, or leaves, are for the healing of nations. (*Rev.* xxii. 2.)

III. *The touch of Jesus Christ.*—(*Matt.* xiv. 36.)—Also the poor woman in this Gospel. If the magnet, by contact, can draw iron to itself, how much more strongly when Jesus Christ is touched, by faith and devotion, can He draw to Himself our hard and iron hearts.

Epilogue.—Seek to obtain the eye, word, and touch of Jesus Christ. He has left a Presence with you. (*Jer.* xxiii. 23.)

SERMON 669.

THE ENEMIES OF JESUS CHRIST.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

"They laughed Him to scorn."—*Matt. xi. 24.*

Introduction.—It is remarkable how many enemies of our Blessed Lord are mentioned in this present Gospel. He was 'pressed' and 'thronged' (Mark v. 24) going to Jairus' house. He was hindered when passing within, and 'laughed to scorn' when He spoke. These throngers, hinderers, and deriders are not extinct even amongst ourselves. We note—

I. *Those who throng Jesus Christ.*—1) Those who enter His courts, and attend upon Divine things without any preparation and earnestness of soul. Approaching Him in the body, with hearts far from Him. (Isa. xxix. 13.) Corpses in a house, throng, press, weigh us down. We are glad to bury to our dead as soon as possible. What a corpse is to us in the house, that an insincere worshipper is to Jesus Christ, Who tried to purify the temple when He was on earth. Such almost drove God from His temple. (Ezek. viii. 6.) 2) Those who encroach upon God's temples, or earthly rites, who narrow the site of the Church. (Ezek. xliii. 8.) Solomon had no noise in building the Temple. (1 Kings vi. 7.) 3) Those who unworthily communicate. These lead Jesus Christ into a hostile house, in which He is wholly surrounded by sins which throng and press Him. (John xiii. 21.) We must, like the poor woman, touch His garment in the communion with—1) humility; 2) fervour; 3) shame; 4) reverence; 5) faith; and, 6) confession of sin.

II. *Those who hinder Jesus Christ.*—1) Those who doubt and distrust God, both His goodness and power; trying to be sufficient by themselves for themselves, having no confidence in Jesus Christ. 2) Those who confirm sinners in their wickedness, and so hinder souls from repentance. 3) Those who prevent others, even at death, for making what compensation is in their power. Such are the minstrels who hindered the healing.

III. *Those who laugh at Jesus Christ.*—Scorners, and the hardened, who are ever present in the world. 1) Those who twist, turn, and make light of His word and teaching. They do this because (1 Cor. ii. 14). 2) Those who despise and turn to a bad meaning the commands of Jesus Christ.

Epilogue.—Let us be like Lot (Gen. xix. 14), remembering (Gal. vi. 7).

SERMON 670.

THE HEALING TOUCH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)“If I may but touch His garment I shall be whole.”—*Matt. ix. 21.*

Introduction.—(Eph. v. 14) implies the helping grace of God. Sin brought—1) The loss of Divine grace; and deformity for beauty. 2) A corruption of natural goodness. 3) A condemnation of punishment. ‘Arise’ by the freedom of thy will, and ‘Christ shall give thee light,’ if thou but touch the hem of His garment. Who (Ps. civ. 2). In this healing, spiritual touch there are four points to be noted.

I. *A drawing near.*—We might hear and see, but could not ‘touch’ afar off; so the healing world might not come nigh the sinner, who ought to draw nigh unto God if he would be justified. In which process the mind is moved by God from a state of sin to a state of grace, the heart being removed by the motion of a free will, from sin by detestation, to God by desire. (James iv. 8.) God allows himself to be touched by those who earnestly seek him. Case of Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11-14), implies—1) Faith; 2) a sense of need.

II. *A contact.*—A nearness which requires a medium is no ‘touch.’ Hence the conduct of the multitude. (Luke vi. 19.) This contact implies—1) Heartfelt contrition; 2) absolute submission; 3) full confession. David, after his fall. (Ps. xxxii. 3-5.) The cry of itself was insufficient.

III. *A consolidation.*—Or joining. ‘The hem’ joined to the garment, as the touch would be imperfect; a solid union, not a touching of the air. (1 Cor. ix. 26.) Not in words, but deeds; for the kingdom is not in word, but in power. Some touch the air by a sorrow for sin in words, which produces no action of amendment of life. Ahab’s repentance was in act, and so it was accepted. (1 Kings xxi. 29.) Abel’s offering was a real touching of substance. (Gen. iv. 4.) This touch must be—1) Solid; 2) uniting; 3) communicative.

IV. *An adhesion.*—‘And I shall be whole.’ A dead coal requires a long and close contact with the live coal to ignite it; so the soul requires to cling to Jesus Christ to be saved. For (1 Cor. vi. 17; Ps. lxxiii. 28). This adhesion must be—1) Firm; 2) lasting; 3) entire; not extended to one part of the soul only.

Epilogue.—So seek thy salvation by union with Jesus Christ.

SERMON 671.

AFFLICTION AND HOLINESS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“The maid arose.”—*Matt.* ix. 25.

Introduction.—It was the general custom of our Blessed Lord to give a precept or a word of warning, after doing any miracle of mercy. As. (John v. 14.) Why is nothing said to the maid about the ordering of her after life? Because death itself is the best teacher; the sepulchre is a great school of learning. Death itself gave sufficient instruction for the future life. If any one here present has been snatched from the doors of death, from grievous peril or disease, he knows, O master Death, what gratitude all the powers of mind and body ought to render to the Divine Physician, and how amendment of life ought to follow this deliverance; and how, unless this follows, such deliverance may in the end prove but the prelude to a severer punishment.

I. *The case of Lazarus.*—(John xi. 44.)—To teach us that all the powers of mind and body were henceforth to be given to God; his life to add to the glory of Jesus Christ.

II. *A preserved life is due to God.*—Feet were bound to the temple; the hands to works of mercy; the eyes for beholding the necessities of the poor.

III. *The ingratitude of forgetting God.*—Such, like Noah’s raven, returned to the ark whilst shelter was needful, and cared for it no more when another habitation could be found.

IV. *The heaviest punishment is present rest.*—When God, finding warnings and punishments ineffectual, He leaves the sinner to himself, and lets him walk on in his own way.

V. *The sinner left to his own will.*—The first ‘I am He’ (John xviii. 5), spoken in mercy, to prevent their crime. Words repeated, no after effect; these betrayers were left to work their own will now. The ‘I am He’ will one day be spoken not in mercy, but as distributing a justice most severe. O terrible judgments of God.

Epilogue.—Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God; let us take this correction as in mercy given for our amendment of life, so as to be amended not with agony and punishment, but that we may obtain eternal glory. Saying with Job. (Job vi. 9.) Let us rise from the couch of sin and sorrow.

SERMON 672.

THE FOUR SOULS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)

“The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.”—*Matt.* ix. 24.

Introduction.—Everything tends towards its proper end; a stone to the ground; a river to the sea; that which is light, to ascend; that which is heavy, to sink down. Heaven is man's end; the soul cannot rest until it gets there. ‘O Lord, Thou hast created us for Thee, and our heart is unquiet until it rests in Thee.’ (Aug.) This the Lord considered in reference to the maid, and so He saved her, that by faith she might come to a good end, and attain eternal life. Hence He said, ‘The maid is not dead’ in eternal death, ‘but sleepeth’ in natural death. The maid is a type of the soul, and we find four kinds of damsels, or souls, mentioned in Holy Scripture.

I. *A dead soul.*—Like this dead maid, is a soul which is dead in trespasses and sins; which is separated from God as the soul is separated from the body. In this spiritual resurrection—1) Minstrels, or vain pleasures, are expelled from the house of the conscience. 2) The tumultuous crowd, or occupations, keeping the soul from God. 3) God comes by contrition into the house of the conscience. 4) Repentance. 5) Resistance to sin; and 6) grace came into the house, or the heart, in the persons of SS. Peter, James, and John. When Peter lost his contrition and denied Jesus Christ, ‘He went out,’ etc.

II. *A fair or beautiful soul.*—(Cant. vii. 6.)—Rebekah a type (Gen. xxiv. 16) of the fair soul. Our beauty of soul comes from—1) Living in a loving spirit: offering drink to Eliezer. 2) Pure: Rebekah, a virgin. 3) Humble: ‘I will draw for thy camels also. (James iv. 6.) Kind: she gave water to the camels. (Gen. xxiv. 19.) So also. (Luke vi. 36.)

III. *A soul betrothed to God.*—(Hosea ii. 19, 20.)—Faith is the ring of the betrothed; which is round, as signifying that faith is unlimited, and its fruits continuous. This betrothed soul must be clothed with—1) modesty; 2) temperance; 3) constancy; 4) prudence, in regulating all the senses.

IV. *A crowned soul.*—Such a soul in eternal glory in the eternal kingdom will be as (Isa. lxi. 10) adorned with jewels; as Esther was crowned by Ahasuerus. Vashti signifies the soul, which was crowned at first, but lost its crown through pride. The humble soul of man has been chosen to repair the loss of the angels. (Ps. viii. 6.)

Epilogue.—O seek, then, to have your souls fair in goodness, betrothed to God by holiness; that they may be crowned with glory.

SERMON 673.

THE SUPPLIANT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“There came a certain ruler and worshipped Him.”—*Matt. ix. 18.*

Introduction.—On the ruler making his petition; the Lord hearkened and heard it. So when any sinner comes to Jesus Christ and prays to Him on behalf of his daughter, his defiled soul, Jesus Christ arises from the will of punishing to the desire of expending upon that soul all His love and compassion. Jesus Christ when sought for by devotion of soul, follows the sinner in sympathy, forgiving his sin, and restoring the life of lost grace. He did this to S. Mary Magdalene, saying (*Luke vii. 47*). In this ruler we note—

I. *A faithful approach.*—He ‘came’ to Jesus Christ with His bodily steps, led by a loving, humble faith. The ruler having a dead daughter represents the sinner who has a dead soul. Such an one led by faith ought to bring this soul to Jesus Christ. (*Rom. v. 12.*) Into contact with Jesus Christ; so that His pardon, love, and influence may rest upon it; must come very nigh, nay, close up to Jesus Christ.

II. *A suppliant adoration.*—(*Ps. xcvi. 6.*)—‘And worshipped Him,’ falling down at His feet. As the sinner ought to adore, desiring to obtain life from Him. Casting out all thoughts of self and power of self, and bending wholly and unreservedly before Him. Worship of soul is an entire submission of will.

III. *A humble petition.*—‘My daughter,’ etc. Earnestly asked; only one daughter. Sinner only has one soul; losing that he loses all. Two things ‘come,’ by Thy preventing grace; and ‘lay Thy hand,’ by Thy perfecting grace (*Phil. i. 6*; *Job xxvi. 13*); ‘crooked serpent,’ or the evil spirit of sin which the hand of Divine compassion can alone eject.

Epilogue.—Learn to love the soul and value it as the ‘Ruler’ did his daughter; then will no sacrifice be deemed too great, that it may be brought to approach, to adore, and to ask pardon and peace of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 674.

THE DEAD WHO BURY THE DEAD.—(*Holy Gospel, Ser. VIII.*)

“When Jesus came into the Ruler’s house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise.”—*Matt. ix. 23.*

Introduction.—(*Luke ix. 60.*)—How can this be done? In what nation or place? It was done in the Ruler’s house in this Gospel; and not only there in Capernaum, but it is often done in other places, nay, in this place, by those who—

I. *Praise the evil deeds of others.*—Have you never joined in or heard the evil deeds of a man in power and position praised. Is the race of Ahab’s four hundred prophets (*1 Kings xxii. 6*) extinct? Prophets who flattered the king in all his wickedness? Prophets who (*Ezek. xiii. 10*)? The dead buried the dead; Herod Agrippa (*Acts xii. 22*). So did the councillors of Henry VIII. after his murders, etc. We, dead in trespasses and sins, are burying dead souls, when we praise and magnify the sins of another.

II. *Join others in sin.*—Leading others onward to intoxication, and becoming intoxicated ourselves. The intoxicated are more dead than living. S. Augustine calls intoxication ‘a well and ditch of hell.’ Many are ashamed of being outdone in wickedness.

III. *Conceal the faults of their children.*—Parents who do not correct but conceal and excuse their children’s faults, are dead parents, burying dead children. David condoned Amnon’s sin (*2 Sam. xiii. 21*); he did not deliver him up to punishment, nor did he punish Amnon’s murder. (*2 Sam. xiii. 39.*) So Eli.

IV. *Do not warn the dying of their state.*—We cheer them up with false hopes of future recovery, led by fleshly love, or by contempt of danger, or by self love.

V. *Hinder others from repentance and amendment.*—Checking their desire of amendment of life, and persuading them that it is better to enjoy the present, than to lay up in store a good hope for the future.

Epilogue.—Let each one walk circumspectly; avoiding the corpse-bearers who bury themselves and others; saying, Give place, the ‘maid,’ my soul, ‘is not dead but sleepeth.’

SERMON 675.

THE ECONOMY OF FAITH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IX.)

“Thy faith hath made thee whole.”—*Matt. ix. 22.*

Introduction.—This poor woman, despite her sufferings, was dowered with seven graces—1) Patience; for she had suffered many years without complaint. ‘Behold a woman!’ a spectacle of joy to God and to His angels. 2) Humility. 3) Fervour. 4) Reverence; touched ‘hem,’ not feet like S. Mary Magdalene. 5) Love; hence called ‘daughter.’ 6) Faith. 7) Gratitude. (*Luke viii. 47.*) It was her faith especially that commended her to the Lord; for faith is—

I. *Omnipotent.*—(*Mark ix. 23; v. 36; xi. 23, 24.*)—Faith can obtain greater blessings than are sought for. So with the woman of Canaan. (*Matt. xv. 28.*)

II. *Overcomes enemies.*—(*Deut. xi. 24.*)—The ‘feet’ of faith. Gideon and the Angel. (*Judges vi. 13-24.*) In faith David went against Goliath. (*1 Sam. xvii. 39.*) The best part of the Christian’s armour (*Eph. vi. 16*); it wards off the darts of Satan.

III. *Strengthens all things.*—With vacillating faith all other things are weak. Disciples all but perished through their want of faith. (*Matt. viii. 25.*)

IV. *Preserves from eternal death.*—(*John xi. 26.*)—To live, and to believe, seem to be identical; he who liyingly believes cannot die.

V. *A sign of security.*—(*Luke xv. 22.*)—‘A ring,’ or signet; embrace, robe, shoes, fatted calf, pardon, reception; all incomplete without the security of the ring.

VI. *Highly valued by God.*—Jesus Christ did not marvel at the Temple or at anything save faith. (*Matt. viii. 10.*) He valued it as a hidden treasure. (*Matt. xiii. 44.*)

VII. *The door of all spiritual blessings.*—Want of faith source of all condemnation. (*Matt. xvii. 16.*) ‘I believe in God,’ is the fount and origin of all good things. Baptismal faith makes a partaker of the divine nature, and so ennobles us.

Epilogue.—Faith being the ‘eye of the soul,’ may our whole body be by it kept full of the light of holiness.

SERMON 676.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. X.)

“While He spake these things . . . all that land.”—*Matt. ix. 18-27.*

Introduction.—Some lessons in this Gospel are for our imitation, and others are for our warning. (*Matt. x. 16.*) Like the ‘serpents,’ let us stop our ears to that which we do not wish to hear; like the ‘doves,’ select the best, and leave the worst grain. We learn—

I. *To believe in and to trust in God.*—1) From the ‘Ruler,’ who believed that his daughter could and would be healed by Jesus Christ, even when He heard that she was dead. (*Mark v. 35.*) 2) From the woman with an issue of blood, who had confidence in even touching the hem of His garment. (*Luke viii. 44.*) How different from those who do not recognize the power of Jesus Christ in any means of grace.

II. *To pray.*—From the Ruler—1) Humbly ‘worshipped Him.’ 2) Ferently (*Mark v. 23*), ‘besought Him greatly.’ 3) Believingly, not knowing yet to Whom he was praying. How ought we to pray to Jesus Christ?

III. *To fly from and correct sin.*—1) Sin and disease came into the world together. The woman, to avoid the shame of sin, sought for a secret cure, which was not allowed to her. (*Luke viii. 47.*) 2) He healed the secret disease in public, and the public death in private.

IV. *To expiate sin by repentance.*—1) Returning to God as did this woman and the Prodigal. 2) Come behind God with the modesty of shame. 3) Considering His Passion, the hem of humiliation. 4) Confessing all our sins (*Mark v. 33*); ‘all the truth.’

V. *To worthily communicate.*—1) Having the house of the soul cleansed from noise, etc. 2) Touching the Holy Sacrament with a holy fear.

VI. *To do good like Jesus Christ.*—1) He rose up at once at Jairus’s request. 2) He healed an afflicted woman by the way. 3) He showed an equal regard for poor and rich. 4) He persevered in healing, despite men’s scorn.

VII. *To hold the world in light esteem.*—1) All the physicians could not cure the poor woman. 2) Death had come in and destroyed the hope and joy of the Ruler’s household.

SERMON 677.

SEEKING AFTER GOD.—(*Epistle*, Ser. I.)

“In His days Judah shall be saved.”—*Jer.* xxiii. 6.

Introduction.—In the days of the coming of Jesus Christ Judah, and all the spiritual Israel of God, will find salvation. For (John i. 17). These ‘days’ the prophet spoke of. (Hosea x. 12.) Advent is especially the ‘the time to seek the Lord;’ though it behoves the sinner, who has lost God by his sin, ever to seek Him till he find Him. (Isa. lv. 6.) Whilst in this life, by seeking, He can be found. Having lost God, a man has lost all things. The Lord came; and coming, He was not found by the multitudes, because they sought Him not. Mineral treasures may be under our soil, profitless and fruitless, because they are not sought for. Judah, after the flesh, lost the promised salvation, because he sought not the Messiah when He came. God is especially to be sought for at three seasons.

I. *When He is near.*—(Isa. lv. 6.) For (Ps. lxxiii. 27). God is not nigh those who seek Him in the article of death, having lived away from Him as far as possible all their lives long. (Prov. i. 27, 28). He is near—1) In His protecting providence. 2) In His Sacraments. 3) In His dispensations of grace. (Ps. cxxxix. 5.) 4) In our common daily life; for, if we are not living in mortal sin, God is always very near to us. Yet so true of many. (Job ix. 11.)

II. *When He is seeking us.*—This He does—1) By the motions of His Spirit, quickening life into our dull, sluggish feeling. Bringing home His word or providence to the soul. 2) By trial and temptation. (Prov. xiii. 17.) ‘Health’ is that spiritual breath which comes from the knowledge and sense of sin. Such health had Jonah by God’s messenger (Jonah ii. 2); and also the Prodigal son. (Luke xv. 17.)

III. *When He enlightens us by His word.*—(Ps. cxix. 105.) The prudent woman. (Luke xv. 8.) Hence our Blessed Lord became the light of the world. (John xii. 35, 36, 46.)

Epilogue.—Alas! for those, who, seeking God, find Him not; those from whom He has for ever hid His face. May this not be our case.

SERMON 678.

CHRISTIAN DAYS.—(*Epistle*, Ser. II.)

“The days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say,” etc.—*Jer.* xxiii. 7.

Introduction.—The first, ‘days come’ (v. 5) is specially directed to those holy persons, who, like Daniel (*Dan.* x. 2), fast during the four weeks of Advent, and on Christmas Day eat bread, new and warm from the oven. The second ‘days come’ applies generally to the days of the New Testament, in which Christians are delivered from ‘the north country’ of the devil, from the power and captivity of sin. Christian deliverance implies three real days.

I. *The day of bodily death.*—This day is to be thought of fearfully, so as to excite us to repentance and its fruits. It is a day sure, but uncertain. Death, the end of life, ought to form the rule of life. Life, a ship. To cross the sea of death we need the hatches of faith, hope, and charity, all to be fastened down. Discipline of ship is the strict rule of life; food in ship is devotion. Parish priest is pilot of ship; good sailors are holy companions. Think of the body—1) Being buried naked; check avarice. 2) Alone; trust not friends. 3) Trodden over by others; subdue pride. 4) Eaten by worms; avoid gluttony. 5) Cannot be preserved; conquer vanity. 6) Greatness of separation between soul and body. Think of the soul—1) At the Judgment. 2) The devil, both tempter and accuser. 3) The irrevocable sentence. 4) Its inevitable execution. 5) Its bitter punishment. 6) Its eternal duration.

II. *The day of general judgment.*—To be sorrowfully weighed in the mind: that we may of two evils choose rather a life of sorrow and repentance here, than everlasting sorrow hereafter. They of (*Luke* xiii. 4) broke the ten precepts of the decalogue; they committed the seven deadly sins, and added the eighth of final impenitence. Of this fearful day. (*Joel* ii. 11-14.)

III. *The day of life eternal.*—This ought to be joyfully hoped for; in thought, building an eternal home. We seek a builder, material, place, foundation, raise superstructure, and habitations. That which was first in the mind follows last.

Epilogue.—Prepare, O prepare, for these days; ‘stir up, we beseech thee,’ etc.

SERMON 679.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MIRACLE.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. I.)

“They were filled.”—*John vi. 12.*

Introduction.—In order to profit by spiritual food we require—
1) Elevation of the soul to God: ‘went up into a mountain.’
2) An ardent affection for the Divine Word: ‘a great company came.’ 3) A denial of fleshly affection: ‘they sat down upon the grass;’ which is a type of this perishing body. We note in reading this Divine miracle—

I. *The multitude of the people.*—A ‘great company’ (Matt. xiv. 21); the affection of brotherly love which ought to extend itself to all; that love which leads us to make all partakers of our benefits, of our repentance, and grace. (1 Cor. xiii. 5.)

II. *The length of time in the desert.*—‘Until evening:’ ‘the time is now past.’ (Matt. xiv. 15.) The affection of perseverance: lacking which, the soul of the penitent cannot be really refreshed. (Heb. xii. 4.)

III. *The solitude of the place.*—Far from cities; ‘a desert place.’ (Matt. xiv. 15.) No one could come suddenly to provide. This place represents the inward affection of recollection withdrawn from outward cares, from worldly thoughts and occupations. (Hosea ii. 14.)

IV. *The largeness of the distribution.*—Many thousands were fed by the hands of the disciples; the affection of brotherly help in the bestowal of temporal concerns, which is a sign of spiritual life. (1 John iii. 17.)

V. *The fulness of the supply.*—‘They were filled;’ the affection of inward satiety which the true penitent feels, so that he has no further desires. (Ps. xli. 3, 4.)

VI. *The amplitude of the superfluity.*—‘Twelve baskets.’
1) A proof that works of love meet with a full recompence from God. 2) That our substance is increased by giving.

VII. *The certainty of illumination.*—‘This is of a truth that Prophet.’ They knew that the promise of the law was fulfilled in Him. The light of grace succeeds the darkness of penitential sorrow. And in such. (1 Cor. ii. 12.)

Epilogue.—May we experience now what the multitude did then.

SERMON 630.

RESIDUARY SINS.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. II.)

"They filled twelve baskets with the fragments which remained."—*John* vi. 13.

Introduction.—Oh, sinners, who have not alone (*Job* xv. 16); but also (*Ps.* xiv. 4), now has come the time, of holy gatherings up; recall all your sins; and after the memory has been sadly, alas! too sadly satisfied, still fill the twelve baskets of the soul with the fragments of unrepented sin. The contents of each basket are suggested as a help. These twelve baskets contain—

I. *The salt of curiosity*.—(*Gen.* xix. 26)—Curiosity leads to undue pride of soul, to disobedience, in seeking to uncover that which God has hidden. (*Deut.* xxxii. 29.)

II. *The stones of disobedience*.—(*Num.* xv. 32-36.)—A small sin, yet brought loss of life. If we were so punished for every offence, the world would not contain sufficient stones.

III. *The skulls of deriders and mockers*.—(*2 Kings* ii. 23-25.)—Only a youthful impulse, not the result of thoughtful and mature malice. The punishment leads us to ask (*Luke* xxiii. 31).

IV. *The lion of faithlessness*.—(*1 Kings* xx. 35-37.)—This man might have been a liar, like the old prophet (*1 Kings* xiii. 18); so his fellow prophet ought to have wounded him, and trusted to God's counsel.

V. *The leprosy of envy*.—(*Num.* xii. 1-10.)—How many would be generous if envy were so severely punished.

VI. *The garments of impatience*.—(*Num.* xx. 11, 12.)—Moses so meek, a type of Jesus Christ: so honoured by God; a worker of so many miracles; lost Canaan by one act of impatience.

VII. *The three avengers of vainglory*.—(*2 Sam.* xxiv. 12, 13.)—Only a slight offence (*1 Kings* xv. 5); yet cost lives of seventy thousand men.

VIII. *The treasures of vain confidence*.—(*2 Kings* xx. 12-20.)—Hezekiah wished to prove that he had the means of carrying on the war if needful.

IX. *The scourges of irreverence*.—(*John.* ii. 15.)—By which all irreverence will be punished.

X. *The punishments of credulity*.—(*Gen.* iii. 4-6.)—Satan and Eve, (*1 Kings* xiii. 14-25.) We have often trusted unworthily and been betrayed.

XI. *The smiters of carelessness*.—(*2 Kings* x. 31, 32.)—Jehu careless, severely harassed.

XII. *The disinheriting murmurs*.—(*Num.* xiv. 27-30.)

Epilogue.—Moses (*Exod.* ii. 3), and S. Paul (*2 Cor.* xi. 33) were both saved in baskets. We in a basket should collect and use divine grace.

SERMON 681.

THE FIVE LOAVES.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. III.)

“There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves.”—*John* vi. 9.

Introduction.—Blessed is that lad who, laden with these five barley loaves, bears them into the desert of this world; and so refreshes the worn and weary soul, by restoring to it its state of innocence long lost. These five barley loaves represent the bread of—

I. *Tearful contrition.*—Which ought to flow from a consideration of—1) The nature of sin; 2) the anger of the Judge; 3) the deformity of the soul; 4) the glory which is forfeited; 5) the deserved punishment. Such condition is an acceptable sacrifice (*Ps.* li. 17) of the bread of tears. (*Ps.* lxxx. 5.) These tears are a refection. (*Ps.* xlii. 3.) Purify the conscience. (*Ps.* vi. 6.) Daniel ate this bread (*Dan.* x. 3), and so prepared himself to receive a revelation.

II. *Modest confession.*—Remembering (*Rom.* vi. 21). Vision of Ezekiel a type. (*Ezek.* iv. 9-13.) Right side, thinking upon mercy; left side upon judgment. ‘Dung:’ vices of the world, oven; confession of sin. Acknowledgment of sin consumes it, revealing its—1) ugliness; 2) weakness; 3) poverty.

III. *Fasting.*—Or the subjugation of the flesh to the spirit. (*Joel* ii. 12.) A type in Elijah. (1 *Kings* xix. 4, 8.) Elijah, the penitent; Ahab, the devil; Jezebel, the flesh; Juniper, shadow of the Cross; baken cakes, the subdued flesh. (1 *Kings* xvii. 4.) When the Lord wanted to refresh the body, He conveyed the food by ravens, and not by an angel.

IV. *Refreshing charity.*—As water extinguishes fire, so does the active exercise of love quench sin in the heart, and gains also a temporal reward. Whilst the widow fed Elijah, her own barrel of meal wasted not. (1 *Kings* xvii. 10, 16.)

V. *Elevating prayer.*—This brings confusion of heart to sinners, who avoid it; but it is the bread of angels which is given to man. (*Ps.* lxxviii. 25.) The gift of the Holy Ghost is needed in order to taste this bread. A type. (2 *Sam.* ix. 7.) David the temple; Jonathan the soul.

Epilogue.—Our prayer; Lord, evermore give us this bread.

SERMON 682.

THE OLD PROPHET AND THE NEW.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. IV.)

“This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.”—*John vi. 14.*

Introduction.—Because of these words, this Gospel is appointed to be read upon the Sunday before Advent, and the same miracle is read as the Gospel for Refreshment Sunday, because ‘the Passover Feast of the Jews was nigh.’ It is read twice, as containing a twofold preparation, both for Advent and for Easter. We note in the Gospel—

I. *The new Prophet.*—Is ‘*the Prophet*,’ not *a prophet*, one of others; but ‘*the Prophet*’ which God promised in the Old Law that He would send for the redemption of the world. (Deut. xviii. 15-19.) The crowd seeing this miracle, confessed that the Messias, the long promised Prophet, had now come; and this old confession of faith of the crowd is our confession of faith, both true and universal;—‘The Prophet’—1) of God to man; 2) of grace and holiness; 3) of glory.

II. *The old Prophet.*—This was Moses; he fed the five thousand people under the Old Law with the ‘five barley loaves;’ barley, both rough and hard outside, but sweet and nutritious within. These loaves are the Pentateuch, with a hard rough letter, which killeth and yet containing a spirit which giveth life. (2 Cor. iii. 6.) The Old Law, rough and hard—1) From the multiplication of precepts; 2) from the severity of punishments; 3) from the pain of circumcision; 4) from the inability to give life. The ‘two small fishes’ are the Psalms and Prophets, which fed the people in a mystery by their wonderful sweetness; and by them the Israelites were fed spiritually.

III. *The great feeding.*—The ‘five barley loaves’ were—1) multiplied, so that all might eat; 2) softened, that all might be led to taste; 3) changed into wheat, that all might be fully nourished. The old doctrine was made new. (Isa. xl. 4.) Each Apostle had a *cophinos*, or basket, full of the fragments of the life-giving bread and fish.

Epilogue.—Turn from Moses to Jesus Christ; learn to feed on Him by faith and love.

SERMON 683.

THE BREAD OF DOCTRINE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. V.)

“There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves.”—*John* vi. 9.

Introduction.—The soul needs its food as much, nay more, than the body does; so much so, that whereas the body cannot at times procure food, and so perishes from want of it; the mind can always find food for itself, by feeding upon itself, or upon some kind of viands, however deadly and unwholesome they may be. The bread of the text signifies morally the bread of doctrine; and, being ‘barley loaves,’ that this doctrine is—1) Corrective; 2) disciplinal; 3) penitential. To amend past sins; to prevent future; to atone for former transgressions. These five disciplinal loaves aptly represent—

I. *Hatred of sin.*—God made and loves everything except sin. And things hurtful and adverse to man—such as adversity—have no real power to harm, if sin does not reign in him. It is sin that gives the sting to toil, misfortune, bereavements, and death. The soul fed with the barley loaf of hatred to sin, has its eyes opened (1 Sam. xiv. 27) to see sin.

II. *Terror of God’s punishments.*—When the sword is unsheathed and the prepared punishments are shown, the sinner is smitten with terror. (Prov. xix. 29; Ps. vii. 13; Job xix. 29.) This is stinging bread; for ‘fear hath torment.’ (1 John iv. 18.) Such bread S. John the Baptist distributed. (Matt. iii. 7.)

III. *Shame at our condition.*—This bread makes us ashamed of the foulness of our sins, when they are revealed by the laughter of demons, in the presence and sight of God, before the heavenly court. We feel shame at having so betrayed our new birth, and our Heavenly Father.

IV. *Grief for our separation from God.*—This bread shows sin to be that spiritual death which separates the soul from God. ‘True death’ is when men do not fear the separation of the soul from God, Who is the blessed life of souls. (Isa. lix. 2; Jer. vi. 25.)

V. *Anger against sin.*—Which excites us to revenge sin, and in ourselves to avenge all the contumely we may have caused God. (Ps. iv. 4.)

Epilogue.—Such feeding leads to feeding hereafter upon love and joy.

SERMON 634.

PHASES OF FAITH.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VI.)“He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread.”—*John* vi. 5.

Introduction.—Our Blessed Lord excelled in human, as well as in Divine knowledge. He alone, thoroughly and absolutely, ‘knew what was in man.’ He separated the faith of Philip from that of Andrew, and that of Andrew from the rest of the disciples. Three phases of faith are manifested in this Gospel.

I. *The tardy faith of Philip.*—He doubted the largeness and bounty of the Lord’s power. Jesus Christ questioned him to prove him. A common case. We doubt Jesus Christ—1) His person; is He really the Son of God? 2) His power. Can He do all things? Were all things made by Him? 3) His word and promises. Did He mean all that He said? We are proved by these doubts; our love is tested; our allegiance is tried.

II. *The imperfect faith of Andrew.*—S. Andrew remembered the miracle of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 42-44), yet he limited the power of Jesus Christ. He thought that the more material there was, the larger the supply must be. We all trust Jesus Christ up to a certain point; but only up to this. A halting faith is common, one that has more of fear in it than confidence. Such a faith is not wholly profitless; but it brings small joy and repose with it.

III. *The full faith of the other disciples.*—They, with ardent care and solicitude, distributed to the multitude in full and perfect faith, having no doubt as to the supply. Happy and assured in what they thought and did.

Epilogue.—(Prov. iv. 18.)—These three classes represent these beginning, and advancing, and perfecting the Christian life.

SERMON 685.

SPIRITUAL INCREASE.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VII.)

“They were filled.”—*John* vi. 12.

Introduction.—So is it with earthly bread, with those who have learned some liberal art or handicraft; whilst those who have learned no trade lack bread. We should like to be able to work such a miracle as this; we can make great gain if we attend to the means used by Jesus Christ. If we desire an increase we must have—

I. *Labour and toil.*—‘Jesus took the loaves’ in His hands; He multiplied them. He that sows, gains increase at the harvest. (Ps. cxxviii. 2.) So does wisdom. The wise woman. (Prov. xxxi. 16; xii. 11.) Of the idle and improvident (Hosea viii. 7). Jacob spoke of that servitude to Laban, by which he gained his wealth, as a staff. (Gen. xxxii. 10; Prov. x. 16) is literally true of the life which is sustained by the means of this world as well as of the life eternal.

II. *Faith in God.*—‘Looking up to heaven.’ (Luke ix. 16.) If we look merely at our toils we become disheartened; our need and helplessness press too hard upon us. So Jehoshaphat on his fear of invasion cast his eyes upon God. (2 Chron. xx. 12.) The faith of the widow multiplied her oil, and paid her creditors. (2 Kings iv. 4-8.) If the widow could gain this from the prophet for her faith, what cannot we expect to gain from Jesus Christ, when we ask in faith?

III. *Thanksgiving and gratitude.*—‘When He had given thanks.’ This is the best means of securing the continuation of God’s favours towards us. A meal beginning with prayer and ending with thanksgiving never fails. Eve’s thanksgiving for Cain produced Abel. (Gen. iv. 1.) Hannah’s thanksgiving over Samuel was much blessed. (1 Sam. i. 27, 28.)

IV. *Contentment for small mercies.*—‘He blessed them.’ Only five loaves, and they were not scorned, because they were so few. Isaac’s thankfulness at Rehoboth rewarded at Beersheba. (Gen. xxvi. 22, 32, 33.) So after David’s prayer, he subdued the Philistines. (2 Sam. vii. 18; viii. 1.)

V. *Liberality in giving.*—‘He distributed to the disciples;’ and the loaves multiplied. So Elisha. (2 Kings iv. 42; 2 Cor. ix. 5-12.)

Epilogue.—We see that there is not wanting to ourselves the means of increasing God’s favours. All the means we have spoken of are within the reach of all.

SERMON 686.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. VIII.)

“Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks He distributed to the disciples.”—*John vi. 11.*

Introduction.—Not by a miracle of wonder, but by the daily miracle of His bounty and goodness does our Lord feed us; and we ought to eat no meat that by our thanksgiving He has not first blessed and sanctified to the health of our bodies and the preservation of souls from sin. Grace before meat ought to be said of all Christians for the following reasons—

I. *A confession of the gift.*—By which we confess that we receive our food and all things necessary from the hand of God. Such food is our manna, which comes down from heaven to us as to the Hebrews in the desert. The Church has doves' eyes (*Cant. iv. 1*), which lift up their eyes to heaven at every grain they swallow; the dove being a gentle, grateful bird. Swine and other unclean animals eat with downcast eyes; are capable of no gratitude; greedy quarrelsomeness is their characteristic; so are they who, without thanksgiving, take their meat. Let us before meat, confess our thankful dependence upon God for His mercies and favours to us.

II. *An honouring of the Giver.*—We thank Him first, and eat afterwards (*1 Cor. x. 31*); we silently offer both it and ourselves to Him and to His service. Not like brute beasts rush at our food without any thought of Him; but think for a moment of the food of the soul, of the bread which will be eaten in the Kingdom of Heaven. Let Job be our example. (*Job iii. 24.*) So can we consecrate our commonest, most needful act of daily life.

III. *Obtaining a blessing upon the food.*—Nothing can avail without God's blessing; and lacking it His best gifts may become curses. This blessing sanctifies every ordinance of God, (*1 Tim. iv. 5.*) A protest, too, against the evil nature of matter, as held by the Manichees. (*Cyril's Catech., Lec. vi. 31-33.*)

Epilogue.—Such grace before meat brings a twofold blessing—1) the blessing of the Giver; 2) of the food upon ourselves.

SERMON 687.

THE LOVINGKINDNESS OF JESUS.—(*Holy Gospel*,
Ser. IX.)

“When shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”—*John* vi. 5.

Introduction.—The strong often forget the infirmities of the weak; the rich, the wants of the poor; the learned, the narrow comprehension and bitter prejudices of the ignorant; in short many forget others in themselves. Jesus Christ never did; in His divine strength He remembered the weak; in His all embracing knowledge He had exceeding compassion upon ‘the ignorant and out of the way;’ his tender lovingkindness never failed man; it was manifest in His every thought, word, and deed. We see it in this Gospel, in His—

I. *Pardoning weak faith.*—Hard to think that even His disciples did not understand Him; that His own familiars still doubted Him; yet so it was. ‘Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth;’ and Andrew asked, in simple incredulity, ‘What are they among so many?’ The Lord might justly have been angry, yet was not His lovingkindness overshadowed for a moment. Such unbelief was only what He expected. How often does the weakness of our faith show itself?—1) In doubt; 2) in unworthy action; 3) in striving against God? Pray for greater firmness.

II. *Compassionating the multitude.*—‘Jesus then lifted up His eyes;’ and for Him to see was to pity; He never saw weakness or misery without pitying it. Hard-heartedness was utterly alien to His loving, tender nature. Nothing could harden it; even the suffering of the Cross. Do we go out of ourselves like this? Is our natural lovingkindness never thwarted by our anger, envy, and selfishness?

III. *Awakening gratitude.*—‘This is of a truth,’ etc. One of such power and mercy can be none other than ‘the Prophet,’ ‘the Messiah.’ The lovingkindness of His soul was beyond and above that of the law of Moses: it spoke of a new spirit, being, and order. True mercy ever begets gratitude.

Epilogue.—Seek to have ‘the mind’ of Jesus Christ.

SERMON 688.

THE LESSONS OF THE GOSPEL.—(*Holy Gospel*, Ser. X.)

“When Jesus then lifted up his eyes . . . should come into the world.”—
John vi. 5-15.

Introduction.—Let us gather up the fragments that remain from the refection of this day’s Gospel, and learn some of the lessons which it teaches us.

I. *Fervour in hearing the Word of God.*—This multitude—
1) Came on foot ‘out of all cities’ (Mark vi. 33.) 2) A long way, into the desert (Mark vi. 35.) 3) Was a great multitude, consisting of five thousand men (Mark vi. 44), exclusive of women and children. 4) They outwent and outstripped Jesus Christ and His Apostles in their eagerness to hear. 5) They came of their own free will, all uncalled. 6) They were unmindful even of their bodily wants. 7) They took their children with them. (Matt. xiv. 21.) Marvellous contrast with those. (Ezek. xiii. 19.)

II. *That there are various hearers of the Word.*—1) Jesus Christ preached at Capernaum (Matt. iv. 13), close to the sea, to those who came nigh to but were afraid to enter the sea of repentance. 2) From a ship (Luke v. 3), and returned again to the land (ib. v. 11). Others begin a course of repentance, but soon flee from the sea of sorrow, and seek the joy of land again. 3) Going in the ship over the sea (John vi. 1), those who pass through the waters of repentance to Jesus Christ.

III. *To lift up and guard the eyes.*—So Jesus Christ saw this needy multitude. Want of this, Eve and apple; Shechem and Dinah; Potiphar’s wife and Joseph; David and Bathsheba.

IV. *To use grace and thanksgiving at all meals.*—‘When He had given thanks.’ (Deut. viii. 10.) Waiting for the blessing. (1 Sam. ix. 13.) To the Christian, prayer is half the banquet. (See Ser. 686.)

V. *To have a care for the poor.*—The Lord saw them and compassionated them at once.

VI. *To mark the sustaining Providence of God.*—Manna and quails were given to the Israelites; the ravens feeding Elijah.

VII. *That the soul is to be fed before the body.*—(Matt. vi. 33.)—Jesus Christ spoke of the kingdom of God. (Luke ix. 11.) Teaching them many things. (Mark vi. 34.) In sickness the mind is of more consequence than the body.

VIII. *The conditions of feeding.*—1) Temperance; 2) order; 3) no wastefulness.

A PREACHING INDEX

TO

SERMONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS,

WITH

FIVE 'INTRODUCTIONS' FOR EACH FESTIVAL.

S. ANDREW'S DAY.

Ser. I.—HEARERS AND DOERS.—No. 327.

“They straightway left their nets.”—*Matt.* iv. 21.

So likewise did James and John immediately at the call of Jesus Christ, leave their ship. Simon and Andrew acted upon and obeyed the voice of the Lord the instant that they heard it. All these four disciples and Apostles were both hearers and doers. Had they not obeyed His call, the Lord doubtless would have passed on and found others; and in that case their grace and Apostleship would have been lost to them for ever. Note the three relations which exist between hearing and doing.

Ser. II.—THE EVIL OF SLOTH.—No. 169.

“Mending their nets.”—*Matt.* iv. 21.

The sons of Zebedee were diligently employing the time which could not be devoted to fishing. They were not idling it away in sloth. Like all earnest workers in the world, they felt that time was at its best, all too short for them, so they redeemed every moment of it from waste. How large a portion of man's life and day is squandered ruthlessly away, as if man were eternal on this earth, and no account was ever to be taken of time. Let us, by way of contrast to S. Andrew, note some of the evils of sloth, which, etc.

Ser. III.—THE CLAIMS OF GOD.—No. 655.

“They straightway left their nets and followed Him.”—*Matt.* iv. 22.

Simon Peter and Andrew felt that they could do no less. The loving voice, look, manner, and call, all demanded their instant attention and obedience. Without knowing how, or who, or what He was, the fishermen felt that Jesus Christ had a claim upon them; upon their service, time, life itself, that they could not resist. Do we, who are Christians; who are

fully taught ; do we acknowledge this ready claim to His love and service? We are not our own, we belong to Him, and He rightly claims our—1) Adoration, etc.

Ser. IV.—SPIRITUAL ASCENSION.—No. 346.

“Going on from thence.”—*Matt. iv. 2.*

Our Blessed Lord never stayed and halted during His work on earth ; He was ever ‘going on ;’ there was more work to be done ; more sick folk to be healed ; more sinners to be converted ; more sufferings and contradictions to be endured. So with ourselves ‘progress’ ought to mark every day of our lives ; progress in the spiritual life ; in holiness, faith, knowledge ; in all that can prepare us for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness by and by. We should progress from step to step, from grace to grace.

Ser. V.—THE CALLS OF GOD.—No. 627.

“He called them.”—*Matt. iv. 21.*

As when He was on earth our Blessed Lord called S. Andrew by the word of His mouth, so by His Divine Word does He continue to call us now. In one sense the call of His Spirit whereby He calls us now, is a higher one than that by which He brought His Apostles and disciples to His side ; it demands a higher faith in the recipient ; it is more purely spiritual in its nature ; it is often repeated, and it appeals during each repetition with greater earnestness to the soul. Amongst the present ‘calls of God’ we note—1) Holy Scripture, etc.

S. THOMAS THE APOSTLE.

Ser. I.—JESUS IN THE MIDST.—No. 281.

“Came Jesus and stood in the midst.”—*John xx. 26.*

When the Lord became Incarnate, it was not to work and suffer for man away from man ; but it was to enable Him to live with man ; in his very midst ; entering into all his joys

and sorrows ; that so He might both fully know and feel for man. As He was in the midst of His disciples when S. Thomas doubted of His Presence, so is He spiritually in our midst now as a—1) Peacemaker, etc.

Ser. II.—HOLY FELLOWSHIP.—No. 290.

“His disciples were within, and Thomas with them.”—*John* xx. 26.

S. Thomas being absent from the company of the disciples, lost the Easter-day visit of the Lord ; lost, by his absence—1) A cause for joy ; 2) a confirmation of his faith ; 3) the grace and blessing of the presence of the Risen Lord. Eight days later, S. Thomas then being present, his former loss was, after a rebuke, repaired. Hence we learn (Sec. 11) ‘The value of Society and Friendship.’

Ser. III.—THE VICTORY OF FAITH.—No. 279.

“My Lord and my God.”—*John* xx. 28.

S. Thomas merited the reproofs of the Lord, ‘be not faithless ;’ ‘blessed are they that have not seen ;’ since his faith was weak. In respect—1) to the Lord’s promise to rise again ; 2) to the testimony of his fellow disciples. Faith makes a spiritual resurrection of the soul, and may rightly be considered on this occasion, when the weakness of the faith of S. Thomas is so especially brought before us for our consideration.

Ser. IV.—PEACE.—Nos. 284, 287.

“Peace be unto you.”—*John* xx. 25.

There are two kinds of peace, an inward and an outward peace ; a harmony and concord between all the several elements and factors of the mind ; and a brotherly love and unity with all who are without ourselves. ‘Spiritual Peace’ (Ser. 284) considers it under the former, and ‘Peace’ (Ser. 287) under the latter aspect.

Ser. V.—THE PIERCED SIDE.—No. 253.

“Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side.”—*John* xx. 27.

Not to confirm alone the weak faith of S. Thomas did the Lord bid His doubting disciple to thrust his hand into His side: but that He might bring home to him fully and lovingly that Blessed Presence which is man’s all in all. Touching the side of Jesus Christ was revealing Him not to S. Thomas only, but to the rest of the disciples, as a refuge, friend, redeemer, fellow-sufferer, ‘The pierced side’ was a great revelation of ‘the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.’

S. STEPHEN’S DAY.

Ser. I.—OBSTINACY.—No. 359.

“Ye would not.”—*Matt.* xxiii. 37.

‘Ye have obstinately turned a deaf ear to all my pleadings of love: to all my warnings of your impending doom; to every sign and wonder which I have wrought in your very midst.’ Why did Jerusalem so act? Because a spirit of obstinacy reigned throughout the city; a spirit that hindered the soul from repentance and amendment. Obstinacy led the inhabitants of Jerusalem to become controversial, ignorant, and incapable of cure. ‘Unconvinced,’ etc.

Ser. II.—THE WORLD’S HATE.—No. 399.

“I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify.”—*Matt.* xxiii. 34.

Jerusalem in its rejection and hatred and persecution of Jesus Christ and His truth, is a type of the feeling with which ‘the world’ has ever regarded the Church. The world hates the Church just as Ahab hated Micaiah; it hates her true ‘prophets, wise men, and scribes,’ just as the inhabitants of Jerusalem hated the Lord and His messengers. ‘The world’ stands for a life without God, as well as for the place in which this life is passed. The world places the present before the

future ; reason before faith ; inclination before duty ; success before God's commands. It makes self the only rule of life. It encourages a mind which is directly opposed to the mind of Jesus Christ. We note some particulars in this hatred.

Ser. III.—THE DOOMED CITY.—No. 503.

"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias."—*Matt.* xxiii. 35.

In these words the doom—which was in a few years so fearfully and literally fulfilled—was pronounced against Jerusalem. The several particulars of this doom are related by S. Luke. (*Luke* xix. 43, 44.) This doomed and besieged city represents the soul of the sinner at the hour of death ; hence the doom of Jerusalem offers to us the subject for a spiritual meditation, which places S. Stephen, by way of contrast, most forcibly before the mind.

Ser. IV.—THE CONDITIONS OF THE GIFT.—No. 366.

"Full of the Holy Ghost."—*Acts* vii. 55.

Because S. Stephen was 'full of the Holy Ghost,' he was enabled to receive and to bear such a noble testimony to that Master Whom He loved so well and served so faithfully ; to forgive his murderers in the midst of his agony, and to commend his soul with confidence to Jesus Christ. The indwelling Presence of the Blessed Spirit implied several conditions in S. Stephen ; a few of which we will now indicate.

Ser. V.—THE BEWAILED SINNER.—No. 505.

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."—*Matt.* xxiii. 37.

The lament of our Blessed Lord over Jerusalem implied evidently that some great loss was to be sustained by that city ; that its present happiness, prosperity, and importance would ere long be taken from it. In fact the martyrdom of

S. Stephen sealed the fate of Jerusalem. Over Jerusalem, as over a soul prosperous by and hardened in sin, the Lord and His ministers lament now, considering, etc.

S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY.

Ser. I.—THE PLACES OF MAN.—No. 586.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved; which also leaned on His breast at supper."—
John xxi. 20.

The bosom of Jesus Christ as a resting-place implies, in relation to Himself—1) Nearness. 2) Conformity. 3) Instruction. 4) Rest. It was the most hallowed and secure place that the beloved disciple could find in which to rest. God sets three places before man; but the bosom of Jesus implied a resting in His love, to which one day will be added the glory of the Beatific Vision.

Ser. II.—THE CLUSTER OF GRAPES.—No. 265.

"The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."—1 *John i. 7.*

This cleansing, precious Blood of the Lord was represented in type and prophecy by that cluster of grapes from the brook of Eschol, which the twelve spies cut down and carried to the people. (Num. xiii. 23.) The blood or bloodshedding represents the whole Passion of the Lord, by Whose stripes 'we are healed.' (Isa. liii. 5.) Well for us to consider some of the sufferings which Jesus Christ endured ere His blood could wash away our sins.

Ser. III.—THE FOURFOLD CLEANSING.—No. 548.

"The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 *John i. 7.*

The cleansing power of the Precious Blood is applied to the soul by divine grace. The spiritual cleansing is well represented by the four objects upon which this process is most commonly performed. Sin is ever represented as a defilement, from which Jesus Christ, by His pardon and grace, came to cleanse all true penitents.

Ser. IV.—JOY IN GOD.—No. 40.

“These things we write unto you, that your joy may be full.”—1 *John* i. 4.

Our Blessed Lord came into this world to change its sin and sorrow into holiness and joy. He rose, the ‘Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings,’ that He might make bright all things for His servants; giving them a joy by His present Presence in their hearts by faith, and by filling them with the blessed hope of a greater joy and glory, which by Him and with Him shall be theirs for ever by and by. Christians have a threefold cause of ‘Joy in God.’ ‘God Himself,’ etc.

Ser. V.—CONFIDENCE IN GOD.—No. 469.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.”—
1 *John* i. 9.

We often bear about us a concealed load of sin and sorrow, because we have not confidence enough in God to confess our sin to God, and to ask His pardon for it. Jesus Christ has brought us very nigh to God. An examination of the relationship in which God stands to us, even in four or five particulars only, will tend to greatly increase our due and proper confidence in Him.

THE INNOCENTS' DAY.

Ser. I.—THE FOLLOWERS OF GOD.—No. 219.

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.”—*Rev.* xiv. 4.

These Holy Innocents, martyrs in deed but not in will—whose anniversary we are keeping to-day—are revealed to us by prophecy, such as they are now in glory. Nature, state, employment, and song, are all very sublime, but the most glorious feature recorded of them is, their perpetual, faithful, and close following of Jesus Christ. We learn from the glorified state of the Innocents, that it is our highest duty and privilege to follow Jesus Christ. Let us now seek to follow Him in—1) The light of wisdom, etc.

Ser. II.—HEROD TROUBLED.—No. 83.

“Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth.”—*Matt. ii. 16.*

At the birth of the Saviour Herod was first troubled, then he became angry, and lastly madly cruel and vindictive. This blessed event seemed to excite all that was bad and wicked in him; it drove him to commit a dastardly, cruel, yet impotent massacre. Instinctively his sinful nature rebelled against the presence of Jesus Christ, just as now the sinner instinctively rebels against the plain teaching of the Cross. Why is this? Because Herod and the sinner are alike. 1) Blind, etc.

Ser. III.—HELPS AGAINST ANGER.—No. 454.

“Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth.”—*Matt. ii. 16.*

Had Herod waited but for a little time; held some slight communion with his own heart; and stayed his present passion, he would have been preserved from the eternal condemnation which must be attached to so foul and direful a murder. Unoffending, helpless infancy met with no consideration; with no thought of mercy from his angry hands. Calmly and deliberately no one could have done such a deed. It was during the short madness of anger that the Holy Innocents were slain. Seek, then, to restrain an angry spirit, by commending the cause to God, etc.

Ser. IV.—SADNESS BEFORE JOY.—No. 308.

“Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.”—*Matt. ii. 18.*

Rachel, weeping over her children, is a type of the Church weeping over her children who are ‘dead in trespasses and sins;’ of an earnest soul weeping over its dead hopes, promises, feelings, and graces. By and by Rachel would meet her children in the tearless Paradise of God; meet in the fulness of immortal life and glory. We, like Rachel, are now bidden to weep over our dying and dead life of grace; and we, like her, shall have our sadness changed into joy. Now—1) Sadness is blessed, etc.

Ser. V.—GOD'S WARNINGS.—No. 360.

“The Angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream.”—*Matt. ii. 13.*

In olden time God often warned His servants, as in this instance He did Joseph and the Magi (*Matt. ii. 12*); Noah before the flood, etc. Had Joseph neglected the warning, humanly speaking, the infant Jesus would have been slain in Bethlehem. God never leaves those who trust in Him wholly unprotected. Let us in all things, in small as well as in great, listen to Him when in different ways He speaks to us. We note that His warnings are—1) Merciful.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST.

Ser. I.—THE GLORY OF BETHLEHEM.—No. 55.

“Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.”—*Luke ii. 15.*

Bethlehem, a small and unremarkable village, from the day of the Nativity unto the end of the world, will be a place ever held in honour in the hearts of the faithful. It hath been consecrated for ever by the birth in the manger-cave; for ever knit in close and endearing remembrance unto Him Who is our Hope, our Help, our Redeemer, and our King. Jesus Christ preached as a babe from the manger stall, and let us on this festival learn some of the Lessons of Bethlehem, which teaches, etc.

Ser. II.—THE CHILD JESUS.—No. 56.

“They came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe, lying in a manger.”—*Luke ii. 15.*

There, in that humble manger; there, in all the helpless weakness of our lowly nature, lay the Lord of life and glory; God and man united in this little child. As the child was in His infancy, so was the man in His works of love and mercy. Regard the babe in His swaddling bands, lying in that manger-cradle, and note how the after life developes from that helpless state.

Ser. III.—THE BIRTH-PLACE OF CHRIST.—No. 52.

“Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.”—*Luke ii. 15.*

Many wonderful events concentrated themselves around the infancy of the Saviour. As the King of a new and an everlasting kingdom, men might have expected that he would be nobly born of wealthy and illustrious parents, in Jerusalem itself, as being the chief and holy city of the Jews. He chose Bethlehem as His birth-place, to read to us thereby some lessons for our spiritual birth and new life. Bethlehem was, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE NAME OF JESUS THE BOOK OF LIFE.—No. 75.

“His Name was called Jesus.”—*Luke ii. 21.*

‘There is none other Name given among men whereby they must be saved.’ The Name of Jesus was historical; as borne in another form by Joshua, and Jesus the son of Sirach, prophetic of His office of Saviour; Angelic, named by the Archangel Gabriel before His conception. Open the Name of Jesus as the ‘Book of Life,’ and compare three of its chapters with the book of your own heart and conscience.

Ser. V.—OBEDIENCE.—No. 124.

“Eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child.”—*Luke ii. 21.*

With an Archangel to announce His conception; a birth of a pure Virgin; an angelic choir to herald His nativity; a fulfilment of the loftiest strains of prophecy in the smallest events of His coming into the world; it is a marvel, indeed, that He did not feel Himself to be above those laws and ceremonies which He came to absorb into a system more spiritual and more sublime. Obedience was the key to the Lord’s earthly life; obedience is the lesson of this day’s festival.

THE CONVERSION OF S. PAUL.

Ser. I.—THE OPENED HEAVENS.—No. 343.

“Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.”—*Acts* ix. 3.

Heaven was now opened to Saul the persecutor as it had never been opened before; and the revelation changed him at once into Paul the Apostle, and the servant or slave of Jesus Christ. He never truly lived until this moment of his conversion. In his heart there was a place of darkness, upon which the sun of truth, mercy, and love had never shined. Heaven opened to him its divine light, irradiated his soul, and penetrated to its darkest recesses. S. Paul was no longer darkness, he was altogether ‘light in the Lord.’ To all God’s faithful servants heaven is truly opened in—1) Their common life, etc.

Ser. II.—SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.—No. 358.

“He was three days without sight.”—*Acts* ix. 9.

This darkness of body was symbolical of the spiritual darkness in which S. Paul was enveloped before the Lord appeared to him. There fell upon him an Egyptian darkness of three days (*Exod.* x. 22), as a representation to his now enlightened soul of the condition in which his persecuting spirit once was. This blindness might also have been inflicted as a slight punishment; for Saul persecuted the spiritual Israel of God just as Pharaoh did the Israel after the flesh. Let us consider, in a few particulars, this blindness of soul which pertained to S. Paul before his conversion.

Ser. III.—WORLDLY HINDERANCES.—No. 406.

“We have forsaken all and followed Thee.”—*Matt.* xix. 27.

S. Paul could say this after his conversion quite as truly as S. Peter, who uttered these words in reference to his own calling, which had taken place so many years before, and to that of the other disciples who were called with him. It may almost be justly made a boast of, when the call of the Lord is instantly obeyed as soon as heard. Men seem to be so little

willing, as a rule, to give up anything in order that they may follow Jesus Christ. Nay, more than this, they not only decline to make any sacrifices for the Saviour, but they defend their worldly servitude by sundry excuses, which are—1) Palliative, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE CALLS OF GOD.—No. 627.

“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?”—*Acts ix. 4.*

S. Paul rightly names this call of Jesus Christ which we are this day commemorating, a birth ‘out of due time.’ (1 Cor. xv. 8.) So powerful and so sudden was it, that all the old life and fire seemed to be taken out of the Apostle; he was humbled, stricken down, and reduced from a persecuting to a spirit full of meekness. Not in this wonderful way; not by an opened heaven; not by such mighty signs, but still no less truly does the Lord call each one of ourselves. Let us note, then, the call of Jesus Christ in five particulars; all of which contain some point of instruction for ourselves.

Ser. V.—CONVERSION.—No. 210.

“Straightway he preached of Christ in the synagogues.”—*Acts ix. 20.*

When once S. Paul had seen the heaven opened, felt its light and glory, and heard the voice of Jesus Christ speaking to him, he turned away from his former—1) Life, friends, companions. 2) Belief. The faith which, from his youth up until now, he had so firmly professed was renounced at once and for ever. The influence of Gamaliel, his old teacher, was gone. 3) Studies and occupations. No more study of the old traditions; no further persecutions of the Christians. But he not only turned himself away from his old life, but he turned himself towards—1) A new Master, Whom henceforth he served so well. 2) A new faith, for which he died. 3) A new life of labour and toil, both of body and mind.

THE PURIFICATION OF S. MARY THE VIRGIN.

Ser. I.—THE RESTING-PLACE OF THE SPIRIT.—

No. 362.

“The Holy Ghost was upon him.”—*Luke ii. 25.*

Upon holy Simeon the Holy Ghost rested, since taught by that Spirit he ‘waited for the consolation of Israel’ in faith. He was ‘just’ or righteous; he did not quench the Spirit of his unrepented sin. He was ‘devout,’ and so he did not ‘grieve’ the Spirit by offering to Him perpetual slights. Because Simeon was so ‘led by the Spirit of God,’ a revelation was vouchsafed to him, which as on this day was so gloriously fulfilled. As opposed to this holy man, let us note the three classes of men upon whom the Holy Ghost does not rest.

Ser. II.—THE OFFICES OF PRAYER.—No. 332.

“Anna . . served God with fastings and prayers night and day.”—*Luke ii. 37.*

Prayer is a service or action which man renders to God; one, moreover, which God accepts, loves, and honours. Anna the prophetess was highly blessed by God, in being permitted to welcome the infant Saviour into the temple; and she was so blessed because she served God night and day, ‘continuing instant in prayer.’ Let us note some, amongst the many, offices which prayer fulfils in its relationship with our souls.

Ser. III.—GRATITUDE.—No. 553.

“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.”—*Luke ii. 29, 30.*

In so blessing God for having made good His promised revelation to him, to-day Simeon expresses the highest form of gratitude towards God. All that had been so ardently desired and so long waited for had now been abundantly realized by him; he was fully grateful and perfectly contented. ‘Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,’ contain a high expression of loving gratitude. Let us, in seeking to imitate the grateful spirit of Simeon, remark concerning gratitude that it is, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE MOTIONS OF THE SPIRIT.—No. 208.

“He came by the Spirit into the Temple.”—*Luke* ii. 27.

Simeon, ‘led by the Spirit’ (*Luke* iv. 1), is driven by Him (*Mark* i. 12) into the temple, just as afterwards the Lord was either led or driven into the wilderness to undergo His Temptation. An impulse too strong to be resisted; a warning too mysterious to be slighted, urged the old man, it may be against some other inclinations, ‘into the temple.’ Led by the Spirit, he was brought to the Saviour. Let us learn to submit ourselves to this same blessed influence, of which we note that—1) He drives, etc.

Ser. V.—PERFECTION THE END OF MAN.—No. 93.

“The Child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom.”—*Luke* ii. 40.

As Son of God, the Lord was perfect from everlasting, since perfection is a necessary attribute of His divinity. As Son of Man, submitting Himself to the conditions of our nature, He pressed onwards towards perfection; toward the full strength and stature of our manhood. The growth, increasing strength, and wisdom of the Child Jesus are as a parable to us, from which we learn that it is our duty ever to be stretching onwards to those things which are before; to seek to fulfil the command of. (*Matt.* v. 48.) We tend towards perfection by—1) An instinct, etc.

S. MATTHIAS'S DAY.

Ser. I.—THE WISDOM OF THE FLESH.”—No. 493.

“Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”—*Matt.* xi. 25.

The heritage of man includes two kinds of wisdom, and embraces two distinct spheres of knowledge. There is ‘The Wisdom of the Flesh,’ or natural wisdom, which is concerned with this lower life; guiding it, and ministering to it at every turn: and there is the higher wisdom of the Spirit, which carries the soul above all knowledge into a region of faith;

revealing the things of God to which the natural intellect could never attain. 'The wise and prudent' follow the wisdom of the flesh; the 'babes' the wisdom of the Spirit. Of these worldly-wise and prudent we note that—1) They prefer, etc.

Ser. II.—THE UNLOVING STATE A STATE OF DEATH.—No. 400.

"This ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression, fell."—*Acts i. 25.*

Why did Judas fall? Why, after all he had seen, heard, and received from his Divine Master, why was he able, so basely able, to betray Him? Why had the years of his ministry left no hallowed softening influence upon his soul? But one answer is needed by those three questions; it was in each case so because Judas lacked love; because his loveless soul was incapable of receiving any holy or noble impressions. Truly 'the unloving state is a state of death,' for it is a state of—1) Spiritual death, etc.

Ser. III.—HYPOCRISY.—No. 433.

"Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus."—*Acts i. 15.*

Not in the traitor kiss (*Matt. xxvi. 49*) alone, but during the whole time of his Apostleship, was Judas a hypocrite; his feelings, desires, plans, and purposes were one way; his outward life pointed to another and a different way. The public life of Judas, as an Apostle of the Lord, was one acted lie. Many are like Judas, often unconsciously so; making a profession which they do not feel; using words which have lost all meaning for their souls. We note that hypocrisy is, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE SERVICE OF GOD.—No. 459.

"He was numbered with the eleven Apostles."—*Acts i. 26.*

To be constituted an Apostle implied a devotion to the service of God. S. Matthias upon his election would be pledged to God's service for the rest of his life. Although only two men, Joseph and Matthias, are mentioned by name

as candidates for the Apostolate, it is implied that these two were selected out of a much larger number ; all of whom were anxious to give themselves up to do the will of their heavenly Father. S. Matthias, as readily serving God, reads to us a faithful example of such service ; from which, alas, we so often turn away. 1) From a sense of false shame, etc.

Ser. V.—JUDAS.—No. 259.

“Judas by transgression fell.”—*Acts* i. 25.

S. Matthias, whose happy election to the Apostolate forms the chief subject of the Epistle for this festival, recalls naturally to the mind, by way of contrast, the traitor Apostle, Judas, the miserable end of whom opened the way to his reception of this great honour. Matthias and Judas were both Apostles ; the one having an honoured and the other a dishonoured memory ; the one brought before us as an example ; the other as a warning, terrible in its earnestness and reality. How came Judas to fall, and turn so base a betrayer ? Over and above his want of love (Ser. II.), we note—1) He did not weigh, etc.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

Ser. I.—‘GOD WITH US.’—No. 68.

“Immanuel.”—*Isa.* vii. 14.

It is the end and aim of all Sacrament, praise, prayer, worship, adoration, and holiness, to gain and to retain the Blessed Presence of Jesus Christ in the soul. The glory of the Eucharistic feast is summed up in the expression, as applied to God, ‘Thou Thyself art dwelling in us at this hour.’ The Incarnation was planned and carried out for this very purpose, that henceforth God may be with us. Ask we, then, the several questions of the promise made to-day ; Who ? To Whom ? How ? Wherefore ?

Ser. II.—THE TRUE SON OF DAVID.—Nos. 209, 599.

“The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.”—*Luke i. 32.*

Before the Incarnation our Blessed Lord was represented by vision, prophecy, and type. Nearly, if not all, the Old Testament saints and heroes were typical of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence we learn of Him, in His several aspects; invest Him with a true and real humanity: learn to regard Him as essentially one of us and with us. The teaching value of a type is one which can hardly be too highly rated. On the present festival the Angel Gabriel declares the Messiah to be a Son of David. Let us note that it is ‘remarkable,’ etc.

Ser. III.—THE DESCENDANT OF DAVID.—No. 214.

“His father David.”—*Luke i. 32.*

It very often happens that the qualities of the parent are transmitted to the offspring; and in cases in which there is no such transmission of hereditary qualities, there is a certain semblance between the life of the parent and that of the child. In this case the one is human, the other is divine and human. Separated from each other by centuries of change and circumstance, yet are many points of likeness which associated Jesus Christ with David, rather than with other holy persons who in the time past lived very near to God. A few of such points of resemblance may well be considered on this present festival.

Ser. IV.—THE COMPASSION OF THE NAME OF
JESUS.—No. 71.

“Thou shalt call His Name Jesus.”—*Luke i. 31.*

Jesus, Joshua, Jehosua, Saviour, is of all names the most appropriate to Him Who came to seek and to save that which was lost: it is essentially the name of salvation. The work of salvation is also a work of deep and entire compassion. The compassion of Jesus Christ is implied in His Name. How does the all-compassionate and loving Saviour treat sinners? With scorn? With denunciations, hard and bitter? No; He rather waits for, helps, and receives them. Hence the appropriateness of this name to Him.

Ser. V.—CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.—

No. 121.

“Be it unto me according to thy word.”—*Luke* i. 38.

The Word of God and the Will of God are one. When the Blessed Virgin expressed her entire resignation in the decree which was announced to her by the Angel Gabriel, she showed at the same time her perfect submission to the will of God. Mysteries were announced that she could but dimly understand; she was to be bound up with events which were momentous in their issues: yet she hesitated not to accept the dispensation which was allotted to her. In all things let us from her learn an absolute conformity to the word or the will of God, since it is—1) Powerful, etc.

S. MARK'S DAY.

Ser. I.—SPIRITUAL GIFTS.—No. 99.

“The gift of Christ.”—*Eph.* iv. 7.

‘The gift of Christ,’ which He became Incarnate to procure for the race of man, takes various forms. The spiritual gifts of the Holy Ghost are very many, adapted to the varied nature of man’s want, desire, or capability. The Gospel is ‘good tidings,’ but is also something infinitely more than this: it is a treasury, rich in the attributes of God, which through the presence and mediation of Jesus Christ are abundantly granted to the faithful. God metes out four especial gifts—1) etc.

Ser. II.—HUMILITY BEFORE HONOUR.—No. 344.

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens.”—*Eph.* iv. 10.

Our Blessed Lord ever had a glory and majesty too great for us to realize, even whilst He dwelt in the bosom of the Eternal Father. He gained another glory in addition to this. (*Phil.* ii. 8, 9.) He gained a new and a higher glory from His humiliation upon this earth. It is a universal law of

God's Kingdom that 'before honour is humility;' that the Kingdom of Heaven, with all its power and magnificence, is reserved for the poor in spirit. (Matt. v. 3.) Ascension must ever be the sequel to a spiritual humiliation or descension of soul.

Ser. III.—INSUFFICIENCY.—No. 519.

"Without Me ye can do nothing."—*John xv. 5.*

To learn well and thoroughly our own insufficiency is one of the hardest lessons which we have to master in this disciplinal state. Man is so very prone to rest upon and to trust in himself. It often takes years of very sad and bitter experience before the heart can be brought to cast itself wholly upon God. Man tries to order and to sustain his own life; it is not until God has touched him with the finger of his judgment that he learns how impossible it is for him to plan and execute unless God works with him, and approves of or blesses his endeavours. We may note—1) Our insufficiency of being, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST.—No. 419.

"As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you."—*John xv. 12.*

The true comment upon these words is to be found in the expression 'passeth knowledge.' (Eph. iii. 19.) The infinite soul of God, 'Who is love,' expended itself upon His 'Beloved Son.' Jesus Christ, therefore, loves the faithful with a love which is infinite in its tenderness, depth, and extension. His Incarnation, earthly life, and death, stupendous as are these actions, are but faint expressions of the vastness of a love of which we cannot gain now any adequate expression.

Ser. V.—THE HABITATION OF THE LORD.—No. 569.

"Abide in Me and I in you."—*John xv. 4.*

Unless Jesus Christ dwells in the soul as in a temple, 'no fruit unto holiness' can be produced. The dwelling of Jesus Christ in the heart by faith is a power within the soul which is—1) Cleansing; 2) moving; 3) fertilizing. With this

abiding of the Saviour all things will go well; the leaven of grace will produce hereafter the bread of glory, upon which the faithful soul will live for ever. That the soul may abide in Jesus Christ, and He may abide in it, it is needful that the soul be—1) Pure, etc.

S. PHILIP AND S. JAMES'S DAY.

Ser. I.—WISDOM.—No. 496.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.”—*James i. 5.*

Solomon was quite right when, before riches and honour, he chose wisdom. (1 Kings iii. 9.) Wisdom was selected as the prophetic personation of the Son of God. (Prov. iii. 19; viii. 22.) It is a godlike quality; reaching down to the depths of all knowledge, both divine and human. It unites the soul to Jesus Christ, ‘in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom.’ (Col. ii. 3.) Divine wisdom is a powerful antidote against the foolishness of sin. Let us note some of the effects of wisdom upon the soul. 1) It raises it, etc.

Ser. II.—THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

No. 198.

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation.”—*James i. 12.*

Not ‘blessed’ as being subjected to that which in itself is evil and a calamity; but ‘blessed’ in the result or effect of such a trial. Every kind of spiritual conflict—1) Develops latent powers and energies. 2) Endears that holiness for the sake of which the struggle is maintained. 3) Is rich in its experiences for the ordering of the future life. 4) Has the promise of a glorious reward attached to it. Therefore a man who has conquered in temptation is indeed blessed. Let us note three forms of Temptation with which Satan mostly tries the righteous.

Ser. III.—THE DELAYED ANSWER.—No. 335.

“Let him ask in faith.”—*James i. 6.*

To do this requires many conditions, some of which are hard to gain. That faith which demands an answer to prayer,

implies—1) A perfect resignation to the will of God. 2) A full assurance that God will grant the petition if He sees fit so to do. 3) A spirit of faith which never fails under any time of waiting which God may impose upon the suppliant. The Lord, for our good, often long delays His answer to prayer, to teach us—1) ‘Our deep need,’ etc.

Ser. IV.—THE PATH OF LIFE.—No. 318.

“How can we know the way?”—*John* xiv. 5.

The disciples were not only ignorant of ‘the way of the Lord,’ as to how He should go from earth to heaven, but they were for the most part uninstructed as to their own path in life. Many difficulties and doubts rose up before them; they had to choose in cases of great doubt and difficulty, and their cry must often have been, ‘How can we know the way?’ The way, or path, to heaven, is the one which Providence has assigned to each one of us on earth. 1) It is ‘ordained by God,’ etc.

Ser. V.—PATIENCE.—No. 543.

“Let patience have her perfect work.”—*James* i. 4.

Patience is one of the negative graces, which at first sight would seem to be unworthy of any very high reward; yet, negative though it be, it exercises a very powerful influence upon the hearts that are exercised thereby. It not only lightens every burden which God may see fit to lay upon us, but it exercises an important function in the Christian life: it does far more than sweeten ills and sorrow; it extracts from such like dispensations the means of building up the inner man into a spiritual temple, in which it is abundantly glorified. Patience—1) ‘makes us more than strong,’ etc.

S. BARNABAS THE APOSTLE.

Ser. I.—ALMSGIVING.—No. 428.

“The disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa.”—*Acts* xi. 29.

In the Apostolic Churches, almsgiving formed a by no means unimportant element in its worship. The Primitive

Church had very many claims upon it ; widows, orphans, the general poor ; the support of the ecclesiastical machinery, all of which was provided for by the weekly alms. In those days no one came into the courts of the Lord's house empty handed. Men who loved the faith ; who readily died for the faith, willingly supported it to the extent of their ability.

Ser. II.—THE GREAT COMMANDMENT.—No. 601.

“Love one another.”—*John xv. 12.*

Our Blessed Lord ever combines the love of man with the love of God. God is to be loved before all else, with a higher and a deeper love than is to be given to any creature : yet is the love of man an essential prelude to the heavenly kingdom. Love, whether it be regarded in relation to man or to God, is called the ‘great commandment.’ (Matt. xxii. 38.) Why this should be so can best be understood by considering one or two circumstances or attributes of love. Let us look at it in reference to—1) Its end, etc.

Ser. III.—FRIENDSHIP.—No. 626.

“I have called you friends.”—*John xv. 15.*

It is a very high honour to be the servant or slave of Jesus Christ ; to be allowed to know His will, to receive His commands, and to be rewarded for an imperfect though faithful service to Him. It is an infinitely higher honour to be called His friend ; it places the disciple upon such equal and loving terms with the master ; it bridges over such an infinite difference in rank, nature, and condition. Poor, weak, sinful mortal man ! What is he, that the Lord of Life and Glory should choose him for a friend ? We can hardly either understand or realize such a friendship as this. There are ‘three kinds, etc.’

Ser. IV.—THE LOVING SPIRIT.—No. 595.

“This is My commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you.”—*John xv. 12.*

The Spirit of Love is to the moral world that which the sun is to the material world. Sunshine brightens all things ; it makes the homeliest scenery look bright and inviting. When

the Spirit of Love shines in the soul, it gilds the hardest and the meanest duties with a glory which is all its own; it lightens up the couch of pain; it sheds a bright ray of hope over the pang of separation; it sweetens every ingredient in the cup of life. The Spirit of Love is eminently the Spirit of Jesus Christ and of His teaching; uniting His words with that God Who is love. Of the Loving Spirit we note—1) It is an epitome, etc.

Ser. V.—PRAYER IN THE NAME OF JESUS
CHRIST.—No. 334.

“Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He may give it you.”—
John xv. 16.

Most friends and patrons are very chary of the use of their name; and the more so in proportion to its power and influence. Our true friend and patron, Jesus Christ, hath given to us His Name, as He hath given to us everything else. He gave Himself to us wholly, His Name included; and the more we use this Name the better pleased with us will He be. The Name of Jesus Christ sanctifies and endows with power all our petitions which are offered—1) By His command, etc.

S. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY.

Ser. I.—THE WILDERNESS OF THE WORLD.—No. 50.

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness.”—*Isa. xl. 3.*

S. John Baptist was one of the great preachers of the world; one who has been represented by a Savonarola, a Bernardine, an Antony of Padua of these latter days. Like all very earnest preachers, S. John was a saddened as well as well as an earnest man; a man who looked at the dark rather than at the bright side of things; one who appealed to punishment and terror rather than to love and hope. The wilderness of Judæa, in which he preached, represented to him the world at large, which to his holy eye was but one vast wilderness. Yes! this world is a wilderness—1) etc.

Ser. II.—OUR THREEFOLD LORD.—No. 47.

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”—*Isa.* xl. 3.

This was the great work of S. John Baptist; the messenger or herald sent before the Lord's face; to prepare by his preaching and his life men in some measure for His coming; to awaken them to a sense of sin; to quicken the spiritual life, which was all but dead, within them; to arouse them to seize and to make all possible use of the mightier One who was coming after him, and Who was so full of grace and truth. At His second coming the Lord will be heralded by no lowly, austere preacher, but by an innumerable company of Angels, and with great splendour. Let us note the comings of the Lord, for Whom S. John prepared the way.

Ser. III.—THE WAY OF THE LORD.—No. 45.

“Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”—*Isa.* xl. 3.

This ‘highway’ is the soul of man, which by his preaching S. John Baptist came to prepare for the passage of the Lord. The Lord desires to travel into the soul, and there to abide; but if the way be not prepared for Him to enter, His blessed Presence is for ever lost. This preparation of the heart for the reception of divine grace has been in every age a work of great care, anxiety, and difficulty; there is so much to be done ere the highway be ready to receive the footprints of the coming Lord. The Epistle for to-day indicates some of the most needful operations by which this is performed.

Ser. IV.—THE CRY OF GOD.—No. 42.

“The Voice said, Cry.”—*Isa.* xl. 6.

The cry of S. John Baptist was full of meaning. It was —1) An invocation: a stirring appeal to men on behalf of all that was most dear to them. 2) A solemn proclamation of news wonderful in import: the long promised Messiah had come, and was now in their very midst. 3) A celebration of this noble event: the joy of the whole earth. 4) An invitation to all men to partake of the now offered means of grace. Such

are some of the meanings of the original word (Karâa). The Lord, as of old, is still crying to us; His cry is heard by the mouth of His priests; it is—'1) Authoritative,' etc.

Ser. V.—THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A NAME.—

No. 545.

"There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name."—*Luke i. 61.*

It has ever been held a solemn trust and obligation with the Jew to perpetuate the family name. Hence S. John Baptist's 'neighbours and her cousins' would have named him Zacharias after his father. His dumb father by writing, and his mother by speech, confirmed the name which the Angel who had announced his birth had assigned to him. (Luke i. 13.) The name of John carried no family tradition with it, yet so important did a mere name appear to the Angel, that he named the promised child himself, as expressing the double effect of divine grace; being born out of the ordinary course of nature, and himself to be a preacher and a herald of the grace of God, which was now come into the world by Jesus Christ. We note the responsibility of a name, which implies—1) etc.

S. PETER'S DAY.

Ser. I.—THE PRISON OF THE BODY.—No. 32.

"Peter, therefore, was kept in prison."—*Acts xii. 5.*

The public voice of S. Peter was stayed for a time. He could not go from place to place; his work was hindered; his spirit depressed. An agony to a soul full of burning energy to be prevented from carrying out and on its work; to be hindered by weakness, by material conditions which it is all but impossible to overcome. Such is the feeling of every great Christian worker; he is sore let, hindered, and tried by the body in which his fiery spirit is for a time shut up. When the hope of a glorious immortality rises strong in a holy soul, it almost longs for death. Let us regard S. Peter in his prison as a type of ourselves in this mortal life.

Ser. II.—A GOOD CONSCIENCE.—No. 129.

“Peter was sleeping between two soldiers.”—*Acts* xii. 6.

S. James the Less was already slain for his testimony to the truth, and now S. Peter was lying closely guarded and strongly bound in prison, the victim of religious fanaticism; and yet he was sleeping, with his life, as it were, in his very hand. Many men are on record who sweetly slept, even like S. Peter was doing now, before their martyrdom: as Sir Thomas More slept the night before his execution. No thought either of the coming trials or of the ‘present distress’ affected or troubled S. Peter’s mind. What was the secret of this resigned and peaceful state? It was the answer of a good conscience; which—I) Nothing disturbs, etc.

Ser. III.—CHRISTIAN FREEDOM.—No. 232.

“The Lord hath sent His Angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod.”—*Acts* xii. 11.

This was a great deliverance. S. Peter was taken from a prison strongly secured by bolts and bars; from the custody of two guards; from iron chains by which he was secured. What the Angel did for S. Peter long ago, that does the Spirit of the Lord do for the sinner now. (*Isa.* lxi. 1.) We are all under a fourfold servitude, confined in the prison of the body. [See Ser. I. for this Festival.] Guarded by ‘the letter;’ enchained by ‘the creature;’ subject to the tyranny of a Herod in the existence of indwelling sin. God delivers us as He did S. Peter, and brings us at length to that Jerusalem which is above, which ‘is free.’ Seek to be freed from—I) The letter.

Ser. IV.—THE NOTES OF THE CHURCH.—No. 152.

“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church.”—*Matt.* xvi. 18.

These words were literally fulfilled at the Day of Pentecost, for the Church was really founded upon him who brought three thousand souls into her pale by that one sermon. (*Acts* ii. 41.) Children, as a rule, partake of the mingled attributes of their parents. So the Church, in her earthly and militant

guise, shares many of the characteristics of that great Apostle, whom we this day commemorate. If S. Peter was one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic, then the Church which was founded upon him must be like him in these respects. From the life of the Apostle we gain some notes of the Church herself; and in these days of laxity, it is well to think upon the Church as—1) One.

Ser. V.—HIDDEN THINGS.—No. 248.

“Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”—*Matt.* xvi. 17.

The divinity of our Blessed Lord was revealed but to a few whilst He was on earth. The Jews were ignorant of it; hence they crucified Him. (1 Cor. ii. 8.) ‘The great mystery of godliness’ (1 Tim. iii. 16) was the greatest of the Lord’s ‘secret thing’ (Deut. xxix. 29), which can only be revealed savingly to the soul by His Spirit. (1 Cor. ii. 11.) Jesus Christ even now hides Himself from the proud, wilful, and hardened sinner. The faith, and love, and earnest following of Jesus Christ by S. Peter gained for him this revelation and knowledge. To all, the best and holiest, it is now permitted to know only ‘in part,’ and the fulness of knowledge will form the sum of the fulness of glory. Some things during this life are hidden with Christ in God. 1) ‘The hour of death.’

S. JAMES THE APOSTLE.

Ser. I.—MUTUAL HELP.—No. 100.

“Every man, according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judæa.”—*Acts* xi. 29.

The early Christian Church was, on the whole, poor; her rich and noble converts formed the exception to her general members. This Church was yet rich in works of mercy; she maintained her own worship and priests, and supported the aged and infirm, the widows and orphans. Over and above these, her usual gifts of love, upon the famine breaking out in Judæa, the Church of Antioch sent a large supply to the sister Church of Jerusalem. If one of the members suffered, all the mem-

bers suffered with it. Were all the several Churches one body in Jesus Christ? Yes. Mutual help is the law of Jesus Christ: and that we may render it, He has given to each one of us a special gift for service. 1) 'In perfection,' etc.

Ser. II.—THE LIFE OF DEATH.—No. 447.

"He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.—*Acts* xii. 2.

That is to say, Herod killed the body of James; he cut short his troubled, travel-worn, and anxious career in this world; but the real James, like the true Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (*Matt.* xxii. 32), is living still; is alive for evermore. There is a life which is truly death; a life in which the soul is dead to the love of God; to the pleadings of His Spirit; to all high and pure feeling. There is likewise a death which is holy life; in which, though the body may die, a greater fulness of life, energy, and existence becomes the portion of the soul. Hence the command of the Lord. (*Matt.* x. 28.) The death of the holy James in the flesh was the beginning, to him, of his new and endless life. The day of martyrdom was in early times spoken of as a birthday. Meditating upon the martyrdom of S. James, we may well direct our thoughts to the dying life in Jesus Christ, which is—1) 'A resigned life,' etc.

Ser. III.—THE APPROACH TO JESUS CHRIST.— No. 456.

"Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children."—*Matt.* xx. 20.

When He was on earth, nothing would seem to be easier than the approach to Jesus Christ; and yet out of the multitudes to whom He preached, and who saw His miracles, how very few were there who really came to Him. Jesus Christ sums up and represents the 'kingdom of heaven;' they who come to Him enter into that kingdom. Many, then as now, 'stand afar off,' restrained by diffidence; the habit of sin; the love of the world; their cold love; their weak faith; their wavering allegiance. Yet no man ever has been, or ever will be, saved by beholding the Lord from a distance. True contact with Him is required. (*Rev.* iii. 20.) Let us take warning from the Scribes and Pharisees of old, and seek to come to Him, and be like S. John. (*John* xxi. 20.)

Ser. IV.—AMBITION.—No. 585.

“Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom.”—*Matt. xx. 21.*

There is no state or condition into which this same unholy desire for pre-eminence does not enter. It was not excluded from heaven itself. (Isa. xiv. 12.) In every case ambition carries within it the germs of its own defeat. The history of Napoleon I. is on a grand scale the history of all inordinate ambition which, in the end, suffers an ignominious collapse. Unholy ambition appeals to man's sense of—1) pride; 2) power; 3) pomp; to the lower faculties of an ungraced and an undisciplined nature. We note upon this ambition—1) Scriptural illustrations, etc.

Ser. V.—THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS.—No. 291.

“Ye shall drink, indeed, of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.”—*Matt. xx. 23.*

Our Blessed Lord explains elsewhere (Luke xii. 49) what this cup and baptism really is; the cup of passion and the baptism of the Cross. He lived under ‘the Shadow of the Cross’ from the very beginning of His work. He drank daily of the ‘cup’ years before the night in Gethsemane; He was spiritually baptized long before the end on Calvary. Of all places the last we long to frequent is that place upon which the Shadow of the Cross falls in chastisement, by way of sorrow, sickness, or strong temptation. Yet it is good to abide under this suffering shadow, for five reasons.

S. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE.

Ser. I.—THE WONDER OF THE WORLD.—No. 94.

“The people magnified them.”—*Acts v. 13.*

These ‘signs and wonders’ caused the people to make much of the Apostles; to join their faith, to bring their sick to them for healing. Well might the people magnify the Apostles, and wonder at all things which they both heard and

saw. Yet these 'wonders' are as nothing when compared with the silent workings and miracles of divine grace, which which are daily being wrought by the power of God the Holy Ghost unobserved before our eyes. The mystery of the Incarnation, with its attendant consequences, is the one great 'Wonder of the World,' before which all other miracles sink into insignificance; and four causes of wonder were specially given by the Lord. 1) The Incarnation.

Ser. II.—GLORYING.—No. 171.

"There was also a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest."—*Luke xxii. 24.*

There is a natural feeling of glorying or exultation planted in our nature by God Himself, when in humble thankfulness the soul acknowledges itself to be the recipient of any special and valued gift. The course of life is so full of care, anxiety, and depressing influences, that man needs to have something to work against these; a power to sustain him and buoy him up. Such is an innocent and lowly spirit of glorying. (2 Cor. xii. 5-9.) We mark a threefold glorying—'1) Of the devil,' etc.

Ser. III.—SUBORDINATION.—No. 123.

"Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat?"—*Luke xxii. 27.*

In this, as in many other cases, our Blessed Lord asks a question by way of making his statement as emphatic as possible. Whilst condemning undue pride and the desire of pre-eminence, our Blessed Lord showed, by His submission to His parents at Nazareth, how much He valued a spirit of subordination. The tribute-money was to be paid as a mark of subordination to Cæsar. It was in this spirit that He submitted to the baptism of John. Subordination is a law of God's Kingdom, whether physical or moral. It is valuable to man on many accounts, but chiefly because it engenders a spirit of—1) Discipline; 2) humility; 3) consideration for others. The system of the universe would fail without a due subordination of one member to another. We note three kinds of subordination. 1) 'Legal.'

Ser. IV.—THE FOOD OF THE SOUL.—No. 463.

“That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom.”—*Luke* xxii. 30.

The heavenly feeding or banquet is frequently alluded to by way of promise by the Lord, and even at the most solemn period of His life. (*Matt.* xxvi. 29.) It was spoken of in prophecy. (*Isa.* xxy. 6.) The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (*Rev.* xix. 9) signifies the fruition of glory by a perfect union with Jesus Christ. In type of this were the earthly miracles of feeding wrought by the Lord; in earnest of this the Lord left behind Him the Eucharistic Feast. The question with us now is one of preparation for so august and holy a banquet. The participation of this heavenly refecion implies—1) ‘The endurance of a bitter compunction.’

Ser. V.—THE GRACE OF HUMILITY.—No. 510.

“I am among you as he that serveth.”—*Luke* xxii. 27.

Think Who it is Who speaks. The Lord of Heaven and earth, the Creator of all things; the ‘King of kings and Lord of lords.’ Think to whom He speaks: a few poor, lowly, sinful, ignorant followers. Had such words been said to the highest and most gifted upon earth, their humility would indeed be sufficient to fill the soul with awe; but as it is, our awe of such transcendent meekness is almost lost in the wonder of its existence. For ourselves, we may learn from this day’s Gospel to seek to gain so lovely a grace, and to note the three principal effects which flow from its possession. 1) Of gracious evasion, etc.

S. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE.

Ser. I.—THE FAITHFUL PRIEST.—No. 296.

“Seeing we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not.”

—2 *Cor.* iv. 1.

When a man in all earnestness, after great preparation and deliberation, has undertaken a great and important work, he allows no obstacles which he can control to interfere with its execution. He withstands the presence of—1) Fatigue;

2) indolence; 3) faintheartedness. He bears up amidst all disappointments; he contends against all obstacles; he never relaxes his aim and purpose until God brings him to his end. The Priesthood is of all ministries the highest; therefore 'the Faithful Priest' faints not, but, supported by divine grace, labours on to the end. From such an one is demanded, etc.

Ser. II.—THE RECEIVER OF SINNERS.—No. 414.

"As Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples."—*Matt. ix. 10.*

They came, and Jesus Christ received all who came to Him. (*Matt. xi. 28.*) His mission itself, as well as His own loving heart, inclined Him to turn no man away. Plato had placed over the porch of his academy, 'Let no one enter who is ignorant of geometry.' Jesus Christ placed no prohibition over the entrance into His Kingdom and grace—into the school for eternity. In this Gospel, the fact of sitting at meat implies a familiar reception. There are four relationships in which our Blessed Lord generally receives sinners. 1) As The wanderer, etc.

Ser. III.—THE RECEIVED OF JESUS CHRIST.—
No. 417.

"Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?"—*Matt. ix. 11.*

The disciples might well have answered, Because He came to seek and to save the lost, to do good to all men, to teach men that in the sight of God no soul can be called either common or unclean. Our Blessed Lord knew full well the needs of men, and therefore He became to men their protector, pardoner, teacher, and rewarder, according as He found that they most needed His all-loving help. Let us note the four classes of men whom especially the Lord receives, and then try to determine to which if to any of these classes we ourselves belong. 1) He receives those who are fleeing from the world and the devil to the protection of His power, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE EXERCISE OF MERCY.—No. 425.

“I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.”—*Matt. ix. 13.*

Although our Blessed Lord is perfect justice Himself, and absolutely just in all His actions, yet He came in compassion to our infirmities, to bring into the world a new law of mercy and forgiveness as distinct from the old law of strict justice and retribution. By showing in His own life—in His words, works, and sufferings—God’s infinite mercy to man, He most graciously taught men that they ought to have mercy on one another; that as He judged no man (*John viii. 11*), so they ought not to judge; that as He forgave (*Luke xxiii. 34*), so ought they to do so; that as He was bountiful (*John vi. 31*), so ought they to give to one another.

Ser. V.—THE MERCY OF GOD.—No. 432.

“I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.”—*Matt. ix. 13.*

The call of S. Matthew from ‘the receipt of custom’ to be an Apostle and Evangelist of the Lord, was a signal example of the mercy of the Lord. S. Matthew might have been left at the tax board all his life long, unconverted and unknown. The Lord had mercy on his soul also, for had He not sent His Spirit into the heart of S. Matthew the call would have fallen upon unwilling ears, and have produced no proper fruit. We are all so used to experience the mercy of God that we hardly recognize it. It cannot but be profitable if we dedicate this festival to a consideration of some special forms of God’s mercy as manifested to us.

S. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

Ser. I.—THE WORK OF ANTICHRIST.—No. 157.

“He was cast out into the earth.”—*Rev. xii. 9.*

It may be because ‘the great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,’ was cast out into the earth, that we find the world so full of

sin: that the 'mystery of iniquity' works in it so abundantly; that all unchained goeth about, our adversary, the Devil (1 Peter v. 8), seeking whom he may devour. Many crimes are committed—deadly and horrible—without any seeming motive; which prove almost to a certainty the direct personal instigation of the devil. As the end draws near, his work will become more apparent; but even now, he is ever active with his deadly influence in the world, leading men to the—1) Intoxication of sin, etc.

Ser. II.—THE UNSPOTTED SOUL.—No. 328.

"Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."—*Matt.* xviii. 3.

"As little children;" guileless; dependent; trustful, and above all, free from sin. The pure in heart alone 'see God.' (*Matt.* v. 8.) Who then, we may well ask, will be able to see Him? No one soul who hath the age of conscious thought; not one of our race who hourly is defiled by sin in thought, word, and deed. An unspotted soul! Save the immaculate Heart of Jesus Christ, where can such be found? The offence must needs come; but our Blessed Lord came to procure and to show us a way how the offence can be wiped out, and the impure purified. His Church, once so sinful, will one day be sinless. (*Eph.* v. 27.) Let us note some of the means by which may be maintained a child-like soul. 1) 'By baptismal innocence.'

Ser. III.—THE SPIRITUAL COMBAT.—No. 629.

"There was war in heaven."—*Rev.* xii. 7.

In heaven once, as upon earth now, the powers of good and evil were engaged in a deadly feud. Then, as now, goodness triumphed over sin; Michael and his angels prevailed, and Satan and his hosts were banished from the abode of God. The struggle seemed to be ended in heaven, only with a renewed violence and continuity to be carried on on earth. The faithful are surrounded with enemies; without them is the world, the flesh, and the devil; within them, the pleadings of a sin-ridden soul, which is always rising in rebellion against

God's holy law. Would we be victorious in the fight? Let us look well to our preparations for so dire an engagement: since some—1) Load themselves with heavy and unaccustomed armour, etc.

Ser. IV.—THE VALUE OF THE SOUL.—No. 558.

“It is better to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.”—*Matt.* xviii. 8.

In this and the following verse our Blessed Lord taught His disciples that no sacrifice was too great to make on behalf of the soul. He had before told them that only He was to be feared Who had power to destroy ‘soul and body in hell.’ (*Matt.* x. 28.) The Lord came on earth to carry on a powerful and divine ministry on behalf of the body; but He came to perform a more powerful and divine ministry towards the soul. The soul is—1) Man's one great possession. 2) It bears God's image and likeness. 3) It is the king and ruler of the body. 4) It is the source of all man's power and progress. In valuing the soul we notice—1) A plurality of persons created, etc.

Ser. V.—THE INWARD PAINS OF HELL.—No. 119.

“Cast into hell fire.”—*Matt.* xviii. 9.

A two-fold punishment awaits the lost. (*Rev.* xiv. 10, 11.) A torment in that body which, during their earthly sojourn the wicked prostituted from the service of God to the service of sin; and a far more fearful and agonising punishment in the soul. As man sinned by the body, he will be punished in the body; and as he sinned in the soul, he will be tormented in the soul. Hell will be the state of eternal retribution for those who cast away God's pardoning mercy and His commandments at the same time. Cast into hell fire! We cannot realize these awful words; yet we may endeavour in part to apply them to the lost soul in relation to the—1) ‘Understanding,’ etc.

S. LUKE THE EVANGELIST.

Ser. I.—THE SIN OF BOASTING.—No. 511.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”—2 *Tim.* iv. 7.

This was S. Paul's last Epistle, written almost within sight of his martyrdom. The solemnity of a coming death marks its every expression. Deeply feeling ‘the time of my departure is at hand,’ and fully acknowledging (1 *Cor.* xv. 10), he could, as already in the Presence of God, sum up his life in the words of the text. These words are the earnest expression of an earnest life; there is a humble confidence in them, but nothing boastful. S. Paul was the least boastful of men. (2 *Cor.* xi. 30.) There is a wide difference between the expression of Christian confidence, and of a self-confident and boastful spirit. As opposed to this godly confidence, we will notice concerning boasting, that—1) It destroys, etc.

Ser. II.—THE FOUR CITIES.—No. 498.

“The Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them into every city.”—*Luke* x. 1.

These seventy disciples represent the spirits and servants of the Lord who ever do Him service. The cities, the several spheres or places of their action. The Spirit of the Lord energizes with different purposes and effects in different places. In warning, conviction, punishment, and grace, are the four principal ministrations expressed. There is no condition or state of man over which the Lord has not had some influence. Out of the very varied circumstances amidst which the mission of the Lord extends, we will now notice the four chief cities in which He labours. 1) ‘The city of the world,’ etc.

Ser. III.—MEETING OF OPPOSITION.—No. 251.

“Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.”—*Luke* x. 3.

Our Blessed Lord endured all the contradiction of sinners against Himself without any anger, and without putting Him-

self into any, unnecessary opposition against those who so resisted Him. He, the 'Lamb of God,' went forth among the 'wolves' of the Chief Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, who were thirsting eagerly for His blood. In this, as in all other respects, His own life afforded an example to His followers. As He had sent His disciples forth, so had He gone forth Himself. (Isa. liii. 7.) For our guidance were the words of the text and His own example vouchsafed to us. He repelled the wolves, not by destruction, but by—1) His saving teaching, etc.

Ser. IV.—P E A C E.—No. 112.

"Peace be to this house."—*Luke x. 5.*

When the Lord was born, the Angels sang of 'peace on earth;' His resurrection blessing was one of peace; His whole work was a peacemaking by Him Who 'is our peace.' Peace was the great gift and blessing which the Master brought with Him from heaven to earth. It was therefore but natural that they who ministered in His Name should communicate His gifts. Hence salvation and peace was one of His missionary gifts. Meditating upon the mission of the Seventy, we are led to notice three kinds of peace. 1) 'A false peace.'

Ser. V.—REFRESHMENT BY THE WAY.—No. 236.

"Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes."—*Luke x. 4.*

That is, do not depend for your wants upon your own provision, your own forethought. The mission of the Seventy was typical of the passage of all the faithful through the wilderness of this world; a type which was revealed by the journey of the Israelites in the desert, centuries before. This command of the Lord taught His disciples the sublime lesson that a divine provision, albeit afforded by earthly means, is ever made for the faithful, whom God ever watches over and refreshes. '1) By an inward light.'

SS. SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES.

Ser. I.—THE THREE FALSE PROPHETS.—No. 474.

“Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness.”—*Jude* 4.

There have ever been false prophets in the world, ever been a class of such men as those of whom S. Jude is here speaking; men hating both God and His Church; men who regard neither divine revelation, nor human truth. Yet such men are but the representatives and emissaries of the three great false prophets who will live on till the end of time, and who vary their prophecies and pleadings to suit the temper and tone of each succeeding generation of men. Let us meditate for a few moments upon their devices, and then we shall be all the better prepared to meet their wiles. We note the false Prophet—1) Of the past—Satan.

Ser. II.—THE TERRIBLE CONCLUSION.—No. 532.

“Reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.”—*Jude* 6.

Not for angels alone, but for all the ungodly, is this fearful fate reserved; to be bound so as never to escape, in bonds, which —1) Agonize by their confinement; 2) cripple by their pressure; 3) degrade by their ever remembrance of punishment. ‘Under darkness,’ under every conceivable form of mental oppression, despair, and misery. The beginning of this ‘terrible conclusion’ is wrought out by the sinner in this life. If we would avoid such an after and eternal experience, let us be warned in time, and remark how Holy Scripture treats this question. For in it we find—1) The body is concluded under death, etc.

Ser. III.—THE NIGHT OF SIN.—No. 442.

“Under darkness.”—*Jude* 6.

Light is associated with all that is joyous, gladsome, productive, safe, and God-like. It was God’s first gift to this nether world; it is an inspired similitude of the grace of God. (Eph. v. 8; 1 John i. 7.) Of the person of Jesus Christ Himself.

(John viii. 12; ix. 5.) Night, or darkness, is also a symbol of sin, sorrow, ignorance, and banishment from the Presence of God. Therefore is darkness described as forming a portion of the punishment of the lost; and the ninth plague of Egypt was typical of the state of eternal misery. Let us note the effects of the 'night of sin' in this life, that so we may be led to repent, and to turn to the 'True Light,' ere the eternal darkness close around us. This night of sin is a state—1) 'Wandering.'

Ser. IV.—THE OFFICES OF TRUTH.—No. 354.

"The Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father."—*John xv. 26.*

There is no office or attribute of God the Holy Ghost which more commends itself to all that is best and highest in man's nature, than this function of inspiring men with the knowledge and the love of truth. Nearly all the false steps and misfortunes in this present life flow from ignorance, or from the falsehood by which so many things are surrounded. Half the present misery of the world would be escaped did truth ever prevail among men. Hell would lose a large proportion of its occupants were the glory and necessity of the truth of God brought home savingly to the mind. May we now, during this our day of probation, humbly follow the leadings of 'the Spirit of Truth,' since truth—1) Condemns sin.

Ser. V.—THE ENEMIES OF JESUS CHRIST.—No. 669.

"If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."—*John xv. 20.*

Although our Blessed Lord was so loving, gentle, compassionate, wise to speak and mighty to heal, yet it is no wonder that He had persecutors and enemies. He opposed Himself by His poverty, chastity, and humility, by His spiritual teaching to the popular religion and sympathies of His day. But the wonder is, that by many amongst the faithful in the present time Jesus Christ is persecuted; that the very members of His Mystical Body act towards Him in a worse way than the Jewish Pharisees and Chief Priests of old. As when of old He went to Jairus' house, so now also He is—1) 'Thronged.'

ALL SAINTS' DAY.

Ser. I.—THE HILL OF THE LORD.—No. 240.

"He went up into a mountain."—*Matt. v. 1.*

Our Blessed Lord ever used the hills or mountains of Palestine for solemn and sacred purposes. From a mountain He was tempted; transfigured; He ascended; He prayed; He taught. Upon a hill—Mount Calvary—He suffered on the Cross. The hill, to His divine mind, contains some mystic meaning; it was nearer heaven than the plain; it was removed from the toil and turmoil of life; was in itself a visible sign of God's power in creation. So the mountain became to the Lord a certain school on which He learned, so to speak, the higher lessons of His earthly ministry. Let us accompany Him to the mountain of —1) Temptation, etc.

Ser. II.—GRATITUDE.—No. 205.

"Salvation unto our God, Who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."—*Rev. vii. 10.*

This multitude before the throne, this great company of the elect, is one of S. John's grandest of prophetic visions, and rightly takes its place in the solemnities of this high festival. These words form a song of gratitude which the whole assembly of the redeemed will sing in their adoration and worship before the throne of the Lamb. They ascribe their salvation entirely to the work of God and the Lamb; acknowledging that once they were in a polluted, lost, and alien state; but that now (*Rev. i. 5*), washed and purified in the Blood of the Lamb, they are meet to be placed among Angels and Archangels. They feel so keenly the difference between that which they are and were, that their gratitude takes a fourfold form of—1) 'Recognition,' etc.

Ser. III.—THE CONTENTMENT OF THE BLESSED.
—No. 161.

“I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude . . . clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”—*Rev.* vii. 9.

Such was the blessed and eternal state of those ‘which came out of great tribulation;’ who once were in sore conflict with sin; once were subject to the powers of sorrow, suffering, and death; once were working out their own salvation in fear and trembling. Now they are at rest, having entered into the fruition of their long-expected reward. They are now blessed—1) In nature; 2) in habitation; 3) in employment. There is nothing left for them to desire; their cup of happiness is both large and full. Let us then meditate for a few moments upon the conditions upon which their blessedness rests. 1) ‘They see God face to face.’

Ser. IV.—FORGIVENESS.—No. 644.

“Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.”—*Matt.* v. 9.

It is a sad thought, that a large portion of the misery and distress which is to be found in the world is due to men loving strife, anger, and contention, rather than seeking peace and ensuing it. The office of peacemaker is a very grateful and blessed one; and it can be exercised in two ways: either in mediation between those who are contending with each other, or in forgiving injuries; in passing by those things which if noticed must tend to break the peace and concord between the members of a family, a city, or a nation. The peacemakers are they who at all times are ready to forgive rather than to avenge; and they are led to such forgiveness—1) ‘By the example of the heathen,’ etc.

Ser. V.—THE IMAGE OF GOD.—No. 656.

“Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God.”—*Rev.* vii. 3.

This sealing of the elect, is the placing upon them that true and perfect likeness and image of God which they once

possessed ere man sinned, and which has been so wonderfully restored to them by divine grace. It is this seal of the Lord which makes man like God, and gives to him all his several glories and prerogatives. Upon every baptized soul the Lord now puts His seal, but secretly upon his heart; for now the Lord alone knoweth them who are His. But this secret mark shall be made an open one by and by, and shall stand as the protection of the holy at the day 'of the vengeance of our God.' If we bear God's hidden image now, we shall receive His final seal hereafter. Let us now consider—1) 'The preservation of this image.'

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